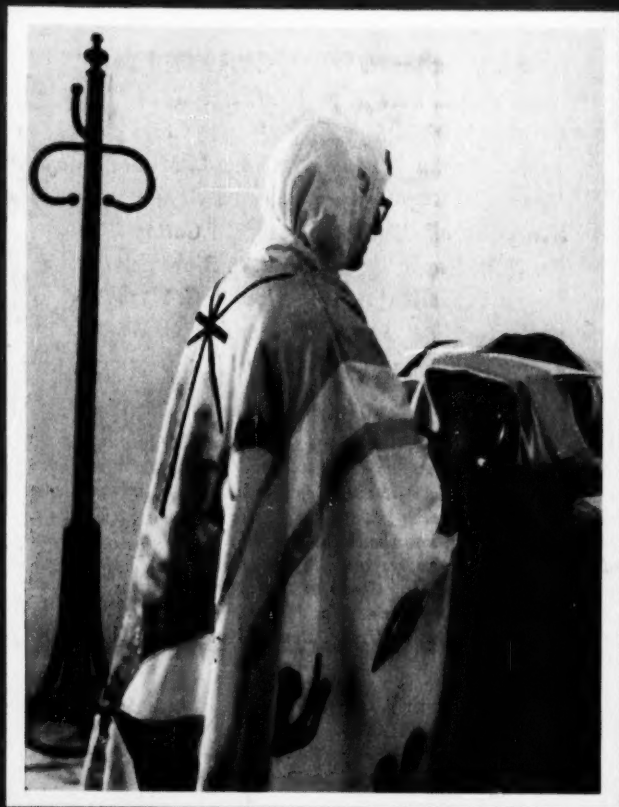


# MAGAZINE OF ART

NOVEMBER 1951 75 CENTS THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS



PATRICK A. COUTURIER: RELIGIOUS ART AND THE MODERN ARTIST

JULIUS E. HELDY: BUREAU PEN DRAWINGS

MATTHEW NOWICKI: ORIGINS AND TRENDS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

FREDERICK S. WIGHT: MASKS AND SYMBOLS BY ENSOR

CARLO GARRA: ROUSSEAU LE BOUAMIER AND THE ITALIAN TRADITION

ELIZABETH MC CAUSLAND: THE DANIEL GALLERY AND MODERN AMERICAN ART

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## THE "NEW ACADEMY"

SINCE the recent war a phrase—"the new academy"—has more and more often been applied derisively to various kinds of contemporary art which verge, however obliquely, on abstraction. The phrase is not heard in this country alone. In France the Communist artists and their claquees use it as a term of opprobrium for what survives of the predominantly hedonistic painting of the School of Paris. In England, where most painters and sculptors are still more concerned with esthetic than with political problems, some of the younger men, led by Lucien Freud, dismiss what we customarily think of as advanced art on the grounds that it is by now thoroughly reactionary. And in Italy, as Carlo Carrà makes clear towards the end of his article in these pages, the older artists describe as "academic" the work of their juniors, with its acknowledged debt to the revolutionary movements of our time.

Sig. Carrà's statement calls to mind an historical fact which today's anti-modernists all too conveniently forget: that theirs is not the first but merely the latest in a series of rebellions against "modern" art. As long ago as 1915, for instance, Carrà himself began to turn his back on futurism, of which he had been one of the five original artist-proponents, and to consider the return to tradition which eventually culminated in the Italian *Novecento* movement of the 1920's. And in Germany during the same decade, the license of the expressionists and the non-objectivists was challenged by Otto Dix and other painters of the *Neue Sachlichkeit*, who proposed a meticulous realism very much like that now advocated by the "magic" or "symbolic" realists in America and England. As to France, both the surrealists and the neo-romantics almost thirty years ago opposed art's preoccupation with formal order, and re-introduced psychological and emotional values which they considered had been unduly neglected by the cubists and their followers. On this continent, the Mexican muralists and the American social realists and regionalists substituted political commentary and nationalist sentiment for the noncommittal autonomy of *avant-garde* painting in Paris.

Considering that abstract art (in the broadest sense of the term) has survived so many onslaughts, and today can claim more adherents than ever before, we may well ask whether the latest anti-abstract insurrection has behind it what the military calls adequate strength in depth. Certainly the younger rebels' quality as individual leaders in the arts is not impressively high, with few exceptions. And what does their battle cry mean? As a phrase, the "new academy" has a fine stigmatic ring, since nothing is so depressing to the progressive spirit as to be told that it is

unconsciously reactionary. But doesn't every artistic style become in some sense academic when it has gained enough authority to interest newer artists as a plausible choice? The gothic, renaissance, mannerist and baroque movements could all be called academic long before their vigor was spent, and nowadays art historians are busy re-appraising the achievement of painters—the later mannerists, for example—once dismissed as belated. On the basis of historical precedent, we should be wary of hasty burial in theory's unconsecrated ground. One could cite numerous figures, now much esteemed, whom earlier opinion wrote off as derivative and spent. The disciple, as we all know, often proves the master's peer—or master.

This does not mean, of course, that there may not be too much abstract painting today, here and in Europe, and that the time is not once again ripe for counter-movements. But the time is ripe only if these movements can arise of their own power and volition. In the arts, revolt is not easily manipulated from a non-combative distance, and a disturbing fact about the current tirades against abstract painting and sculpture is that they so often come from people who are not practicing artists. How does it happen, for example, that many of the most gifted of the newer American painters and sculptors prefer to work in a modern idiom which their literary advisors would have them believe is obsolete? The answer presumably is that these artists, whose thinking is primarily in visual terms, accept twentieth-century directions in art as more or less permanently open to exploration. Some of them may presently return for inspiration to the tangible world; a few of the strongest have already done so. But the spell of reality as the only possible concern of artists has been broken, and non-representational art seems likely to take its place in the ranks of styles—classicism, realism, romanticism, and so on—that have never wholly died out.

Why this should be considered a depressing fact, why anyone should resent an *extension* of art's expressive means, is rather a mystery. Shouldn't we instead welcome the opening of new corridors which artists can enter or leave at will? To say that "modern" art has had a destructive effect on the younger painters and sculptors is patently absurd. Are the latter mice or are they masters? A true artist is not made or unmade by programmatic example, but by the conviction and talent he brings to his own version of program. We might well remember that if classicism had been outlawed by fiat at, say, the end of the sixteenth century, we should have had a lesser Poussin. If the baroque had been declared exhausted at Rubens' death, what of Delacroix? Reform is irresistible, of course, but let us do our best to stop telling artists so insistently what they should or should not do. They will do what they want anyway. If they will not, they are not worth anyone's trouble.

J. T. S.



# MASKS AND SYMBOLS IN ENSOR

*Frederick S. Wight*



*Old Woman with Masks, 1889, oil, 21 1/2 x 18", collection Roland Leten, Ghent, photograph Paul Bijtebier*

**T**HIS year an American public—more honestly a public in four cities—will come to know the work of a painter of extraordinary gifts, a Belgian with an English name, James Ensor. A precursor of the surrealists, Ensor has inherited naturally and easily the perfervid imaginings of Bosch where people, naked as their souls, fall prey to the crustacean voracity and beetle glint of demonology. For Ensor this is a subjective world, the times being our own. He is at once the last of the middle ages and a pre-modern, who discovered the door of fantasy wide open. There are painters who have laid out our modern world by main force, with the destructive courage of city planners. Others have simply found it. Unaware of the demarcation outlining the nineteenth century's sanity of appearances, they stepped across.

Ensor lived to be very old—a tall figure, white bearded, crisp and glinting, inhabiting that late territory denied most men, where the chief rewards are good food and prestige. He lived long enough to be famous, to become something of a national monument, for old age makes the bizarre acceptable. Those who knew him used the word

"gay" over and over again. There was something Shavian in the old gentleman's mockery, his frivolity, his disarming way of taking the barbs out of his insults by his very extravagance. Above all, his physical appearance was Shavian. He was spare, and his beard always seemed to have been white; like Shaw, he was vigorous and indestructible, buoyed up by his ultimate success.

He not only took the sting out of contumely, but he accomplished the more difficult Shavian trick of getting away with self praise. "Before me, painting did not listen to its vision.

"I forecast, thirty years ago, well before Vuillard, Bonnard, Van Gogh and the luminists, all the modern researches, all the influence of light, and the emancipation of the vision.

"A sensitive and prophetic vision, not guessed by the French, who remained superficial brushmen steeped in traditional recipes. Manet and Monet revealed a few sensations, however obtuse. But their monotonous technique hardly permitted a glimpse of the decisive discoveries."

If the great fared no better, you can perhaps imagine the fate of Meunier and the Stevens

brothers. It was the deluge of improprieties with which Ensor first swamped the Stevens which made him fancy himself as a writer. If I find myself coming first to his writings, it is because there is more confession in words than in paint. Ensor's writing is a vast emotional extravaganza in which words stand for colors, sounds and smells. Not only are the arts undifferentiated, but even the senses to which they relate. His figures of speech swarm like his actual figures, like his impressions. A sentence grows into a paragraph. Words are brought together for their resemblance. Puns and the freest of associations are the continuity. His images are painting and poetry offered as farce. They are poured forth. To be somewhat specific, there is a good deal of vomiting in Ensor's etchings and paintings—even the sun vomits sunlight—and there is much the same force at work when he writes. Most of his writings are after-dinner speeches, and the offering is immediate, the power of selection slight.

One thinks at once of Rabelais, and Ensor certainly thought of Rabelais too. In his writing he gives us an imaginary interview recording in tell-tale fashion his likes and dislikes. His favorite heroes in real life are the joyous Vicar of Meudon and King Dagobert; his favorite heroes in fiction, Orlando Furioso and Tartarin. His favorite names are Claire, Rose and Blanche—they carry over into English in the same sense, and describe his luminous painting. His favorite quality is the illusion of grandeur; his principal fault, nonchalance. The animals he prefers are an enraged crab, the butterfly and the ermine. He would like to be the wife of Methuselah, and I shall not tell you how he would like to die. His favorite color is "thigh of excited nymph," and his favorite military exploit is the Rape of the Sabines. The gift he should like to have is the gift of double sight.

He is a surrealist writer ahead of his time, and he is equally ahead of his time as a painter—he is quite right. His art is somewhere between the night of witchcraft and the dawn of psychoanalytic discovery. His paintings, and especially his etchings, teem with crowds reduced to idiot masks, and his human beings swarm like insects. He offers a carnival of masks and skeletons; it is the old theme of the dance of death. However extraordinary the macabre-gay world he creates, it is still more extraordinary that he survived in the midst of it in excellent health and humor. Where Van Gogh destroyed himself and Munch was broken in mid-career, Ensor remained the cheerful custodian of his own chamber of horrors.

This apparent contradiction describes a catharsis extreme and complete. Here if ever is an unrepressed art. In a typical canvas Ensor shows us a victim being held down on a table to be gouged while blood collects in a platter. Blood flows like ink in his paintings. Yet in real life, the curious man was a militant anti-vivisectionist. And this blowing hot and cold carries

over, one gathers, into his loves and revulsions. His canvases, especially his etchings, seethe with improprieties, somehow forgiven because of their innocence, their omnipresence, and their minuteness—again we are back in the subterranean world of Bosch where the demons have manners of their own. A handy and recurrent insult, when Ensor is writing his species of art criticism, is "feebly sexed." He was elaborately gallant and accepted the devotion of an entourage of ladies. Yet he was a bachelor and misogynist—or rather, as one of his friends amends, he simply hated people.

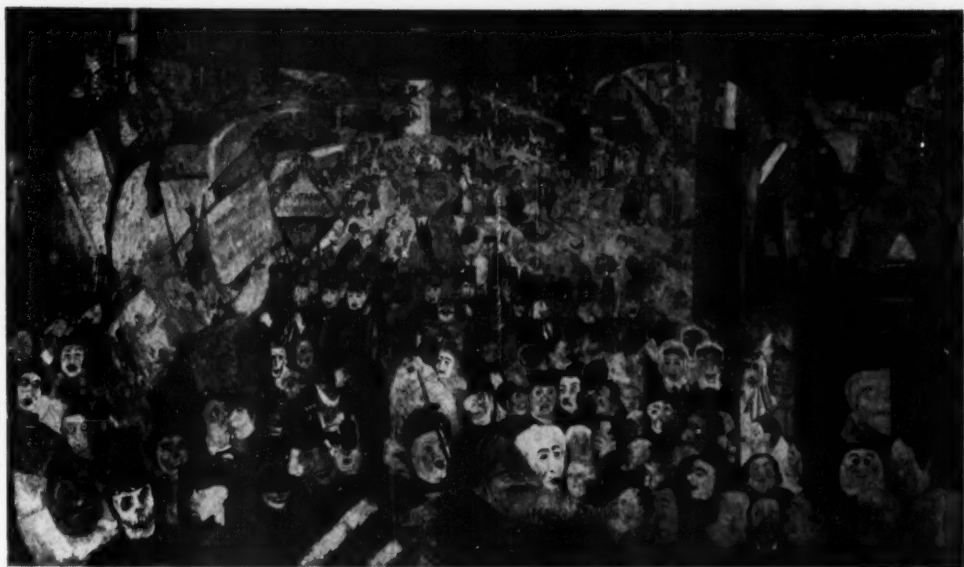
Ensor was born, and lived almost all his long life, in Ostend. His mother, who survived his father for many years, kept a curiosity shop. Her masks were a commodity, and a commodity or property for Ensor they remained. They were worn at carnival time, and the carnival was taken seriously in Ostend. It was adult play, mass play. It gave Ensor a theme. Quite literally he never outgrew his home. He lived in a curiosity shop, and he brought it to life.

He studied briefly in Brussels and left school defiant, proud and disappointed. He returned home to survive neglect and uncomprehension for many years, living at sea level behind a dike of courage and counter-contempt to keep the middle-class world from washing over him. By the time he was twenty, he was giving a good account of himself—were there anyone to reckon it—with massive portraits and figure pieces, a dark northern version of impressionism; one is reminded of the beginnings of Munch. The change to a luminous, opalescent art, all red and silver like sunsets over the Channel, came in the next few years; but it was accompanied by a change in subject matter which stole the attention from the paint—and still continues to do so.

The human face departed and the mask arrived. Flesh shriveled away, and the skeleton appeared. Mask and skeleton took on a life of their own and became the leads of the play.

The mask, of course, is one of the oldest of symbols. It spells comedy and tragedy at once. It makes the carnival possible, offering release from responsibility and signaling the collapse of convention. And—a modern touch—it offers the breakdown of identification. Ensor had hold of a live symbol at the right moment. Soon the African mask was to throw a spell over the European artist, who was excited precisely because this mask was something other than a naturalistic image. It represented, not man as a whole, but some element of personality promoted to divine rank.

This coincided, I believe, with the breakdown of the concept of personality as a unit, ushering in a change of view at about the turn of the century. Suddenly, the personality was seen to be a composite, a plural noun like orchestra or cast—or at less orderly moments, like menagerie. The mask at once covered this disturbing event and dramatized it. The mask, as at



*Christ Entering Brussels, 1889, 1888, oil, 101 1/2 x 169 1/2", Casino Communal, Knokke-le-Zoute, photograph ACL*

carnival time, both concealed and described the impulses that lay behind it.

Ensor's mask antedates the coming of the African mask and its influence. Yet he had found one of the important symbols which ushered in modern art, the symbol of primitive impulse eclipsing the living symbol of manners. He speaks of his masks, "suffering, scandalous, insolent, cruel and wicked." He accounts for them nonchalantly as an escape from imitation—as though there were no more to it than that. "Trailed by my followers I trusted myself joyously to the solitary region where the mask reigns, wrapped in violence and splendor. And the mask cried out to me, freshness of tone, sumptuous decoration, free expressive gestures, sharpened expressions, an exquisite turbulence." One would think that his earliest memory was the carnival, from the time when a mask seemed more arresting, more living, than a face.

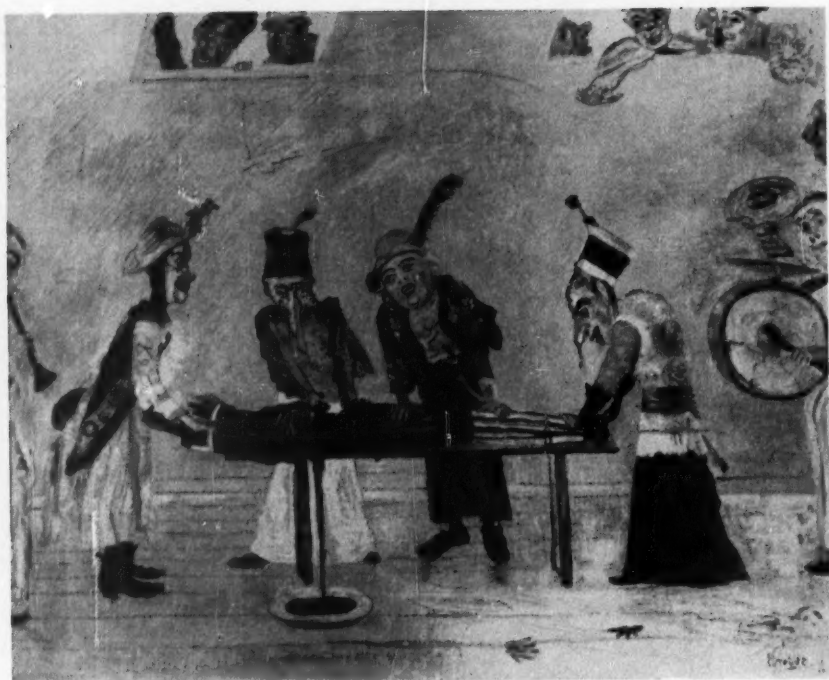
In a canvas, *Old Woman with Masks*, a single face is surrounded by masks, which seem to be either that figure's hallucinations or the impulses and desires besieging it—if there is a distinction. Here is a dispersal of a personality into impulses more hideous, more beautiful, above all more intense than what we fancied was self. It is the single figure set over against its own multitude. The theme culminates, of course, in the *Christ Entering Brussels*. The mood is mockery. In the great canvas, the carnival of masks illustrates both Christ's entry into Jerusalem and the mocking of Christ which is soon to follow. The artist has condensed the two events, and indeed condensed twenty years of his art.

But when the mask first appears in Ensor's painting, we are still allowed to take the scene

quite literally. Two sodden figures, an old woman and an old man, confront each other across a small pothouse table. They wear masks. It is not a gay scene. Fierens speaks of some atrocious and pathetic comedy about to be enacted. The mask of the woman we have seen before; it is a travesty of the dignified long visage in Ensor's portrait of his mother, which he had painted two years earlier when he was twenty-one. He painted both his parents at that time. His father, in his full length portrait, sits reading. We remember this canvas, too, when we come to the first of all the skeletons, which also sits reading, or possibly pouring over Chinese prints. From now on, masks and skeletons are inseparable for many years.

There is a canvas of skeletons warming themselves at a studio stove. They are dressed up as children dress up; they seem very small and very young—it is a scene of childhood deviltry, no more, no less. We are used by now to this raiding of early or submerged recollection, this following up the stream to its source: witness the painting of Picasso or Klee. But consider the date of Ensor's canvas: we are in the late 'eighties.

Moving down nearly a decade we come to another canvas, the *Assassination*, referred to before. Here four masked figures are busily butchering a figure prone on a table—years before surgeons disguised themselves with masks. Blood drains down into a platter in a stream, and the victim is painted red all over—the child's touch, for you can't have too much of a good thing, and red is the victim's color. We know from now on what we suspected, that the red which splashes and circulates so fluidly through Ensor's painting is blood itself.



**Murder, 1890, oil, 23 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 30", collection Marcel Maillie, Brussels, photograph Foto T'Felt**

**Skeletons Disputing Over a Hanged Man, 1891, oil, 23 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Brussels, photograph ACL**





In this canvas more masks look down from attic windows, packed together like so many Brussels sprouts. These heads cram windows in canvas after canvas—another childish touch—for they are all determined witnesses of things they are not supposed to see. And if you still have any doubt of the age of the cast, there are wicked tell-tale red handprints on the floor, the childish fingermarks starfished out.

*Skeletons Disputing over a Hanged Man* conveys its amiable ferocity in its title. *The Dangerous Cooks* are busy serving up human heads; one of which, complete with pointed beard, is a self-portrait of the artist. It is about to be sent in to a banquet.

And so Ensor lives and paints his childhood fantasies through the last two decades of the nineteenth century. His works somehow insulate him from society (for they were unacceptable when painted) at the same time that they serve to protect and release him from himself. He survives in an equilibrium of unholy laughter, purging away his sins.

Returning to the climactic *Christ Entering Brussels*, the current grows stronger, the channel deeper. The religious subject, the monumental scale, lift Ensor above the bizarre. We no longer discount tragedy just because the faces are living masks; that is precisely where the tragedy lies. Here Ensor is on the threshold of self-understanding, or of explaining humanity to itself. Christ is surrounded and submerged by a mob of impulses, and that is the fate of man. The masks are less than human. None is yet a person; yet as a composite, they become man and more than man.

There are two late canvases over which we should pause, both painted in the year 1915. Ensor painted his dead mother seen in profile lying on her bed, holding her crucifix. Irony of a sort is not absent, for she is seen across a bedside table stacked high with medicine bottles. There is now no need of a mask, for she herself is now a mask, both in her immobility and because no personality remains behind the face. She exists only in her features.

The other painting has the interesting title of the *Mask Snatched Away*. It is a carnival scene once more, with a young man in the foreground who has just been unmasked by a reveler. In the background is a large placard, *The Scale of Love*. This Scale of Love, this sideshow, is a ballet for which Ensor wrote the words and music in 1911. On each side, in the mid-distance, there are figures on horseback. One is Lady Godiva—a congenial subject for Ensor, who has celebrated her more than once—for his masked troupe are voyeurs to a mask. The other figure on horseback carries a banner announcing a masked ball this evening, free. The rider himself wears a mask which sports a nose a yard long, in the form of a scythe blade. Skeletons with scythes are omnipresent in Ensor's painting. This figure of course is death. The two

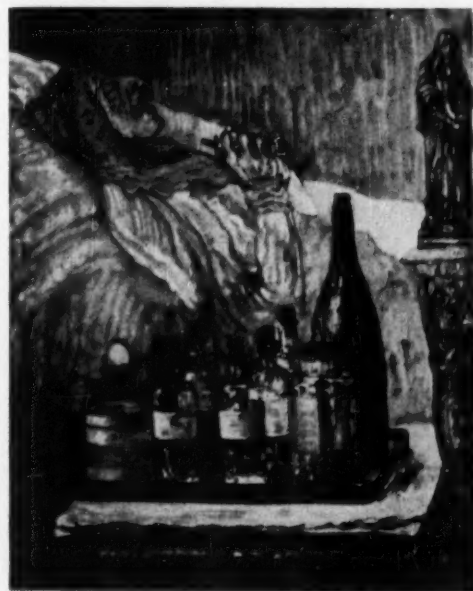


*Skeletons Warming Themselves at a Stove, 1889, oil, 29 1/2 x 23 1/8", collection Baron Gendebien, Brussels, photograph ACL*

figures on horseback, then, are part of a myth older than Ensor. In its pure form it can be lifted from the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

And is that woman all her crew,  
Is that a death and are there two,  
Is death that woman's mate?

*The Artist's Dead Mother, 1915, oil, 9 1/2 x 7 1/4", collection Mme. Richard Daveluy, Ostend (from Fierens, James Ensor, Paris, 1926)*







*The Mask Snatched Away*, 1913, oil, 49 x 90 1/2", collection Mme. Sacher-Stehlin, Basel (from *Florens*, James Ensor, Paris, 1926)

There are two extraordinary etchings identifying the artist with the skeleton, either with death itself or with his father long dead—for the first skeleton, you remember, was his father reading. To return to these etchings, one is called a *Self-Portrait in 1960*—one hundred years after the artist's birth, and—let us remark with embarrassment—only nine years after his current American exhibition. Here Ensor is no more than bones, recumbent, propped up a little, and perhaps taking notice. The other etching is also a self-portrait. In the first state a normal self-portrait, it was later skeletonized and the face becomes a skull. Add to this a photograph of the middle-aged Ensor genially painting with a skull on the head of his easel—a *memento mori* with a vengeance.

Or perhaps, since Ensor lives in a world of wry humor, it is a reminder *not* to die, to flee back into childhood, to the beginnings of life, and so insulated, to live on and on. He can say, like Chesterton in his ballade:

*The strangest whim has seized me after all,  
I think I shall not hang myself today.*

Mask and skeleton have this in common: they both spell or inspire fear for Ensor, who is child to them both—if they are his parents, he is their creator. Something is to be exorcised, laughed away from moment to moment. Ensor is both Hamlet and Yorick in one. With his own skull in hand, he has done as well as a man can do with the battle of mortality. We do not have to ask where his quips are now. They are still with us.

**NOTE:** A comprehensive retrospective exhibition of the works of James Ensor is now circulating in America. Opening at the Museum of Modern Art on September 26th, it remained there until October 28th. It will be on view at the Cleveland Museum of Art from November 15th to December 15th; at the City Art Museum, St. Louis, from December 30th to January 20th; and from February 13th to March 12th at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. All pictures illustrated except *The Mask Snatched Away* and *The Artist's Dead Mother* are included in the exhibition and are reproduced by courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.

*My Portrait in 1960, 1888*, etching, 2 1/4 x 4 1/4"



# ROUSSEAU LE DOUANIER AND THE ITALIAN TRADITION

*Carlo Carrà*

LET no one be surprised that this article begins with the *Douanier* Rousseau and goes on to a discussion of three of the greatest Italian painters of the far past—Giotto, Paolo Uccello and Piero della Francesca. The fact is that all four of these masters have had a great deal to do with the revision of critical values which began in Italy immediately following the decline of the first futurist movement in 1916 and continued until roughly 1930. To American readers it may seem odd that Rousseau should be considered together with three artists so remote from him in time, origin, intellectual capacity and program. Yet, as I shall try to make clear, the *Douanier* meant as much to us in post-futurist Italy as his great predecessors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. His art did not seem to us irreconcilable with theirs, but rather part of the same glorious precedent to which, after years of experimentation, we wished to return.

I am thinking now of the pictures of a poor devil whose memory lingers in my mind—a man who never complained even if people thought of his work as mere daubing rather than anything pleasing to the eye, who went through life quietly, as spontaneous and ingenuous as a sleepwalker, yet with a significance that comes out clearly in his paintings.

Henri Rousseau, born in Laval on May 20th, 1844, had a strange ability to dream amid the passions and stimuli of everyday life in such a way that the creatures of his imagination took on material form. This tendency was abetted by his conception of painting, which went through a series of discoveries. The *Douanier's* work has always been classed as "popular painting," and yet it seems to me that there was something very special, indeed unique, about him, which will never be repeated. Attempts to create the same legend about the bricklayer Bombois and the mechanic Boyer have had to be abandoned, because the discrepancy was so apparent.

Rousseau was in his own way a fighter for art, but we must not fall into the error of confusing him with the "wild men of the drawing-room" whom we run into on every hand. His is an incomparable lyric vibration, made up of purity and humility. This endows his imagery with an inventive renewal of style, in which the



Henri Rousseau, *Self-Portrait with Landscape*, 1890, oil 57 1/2 x 44 3/4", Modern Museum, Prague, courtesy Museum of Modern Art

manner whereby reality is transformed never seems like an escape from the human, as it does in so much painting of today.

Let us look at the work of this miraculous failure and begin by saying that his scenes and people all have something magical about them. Though real life fired his feelings and aroused his imagination, he saw men and objects as if in a dream. The many scenes of Paris that he painted lack the slightest photographic quality; they are indeed pictures of a *state of mind*. The Parisian suburbs, like the virgin forests of Mexico, served only as pretexts for the wanderings of his fantasy. He took refuge in dreams, and his whole art became a dream. No matter what he painted, reality took on strange aspects and merged with his visionary world of fancy. The benches and bridges along the Seine, the flag-decked ships riding at anchor, the Eiffel Tower, the cart of Père Juniet, the dogs, the children, the wild beasts in combat, the lion sniffing at the sleeping mandolin-player, are all visions of a man who knew no other law than his own imagination. Such paintings were bound to arouse laughter in artistic circles in Paris at the turn of the century—that is, except for a few rebel spirits among the literary lights of the Left Bank. Rousseau was discovered by Alfred Jarry, encouraged by Remy



Henri Rousseau, *Liberty Inviting Artists to Participate in 22nd Exposition of the Indépendants, 1906*, oil, 69 1/2 x 47 1/2", courtesy Sidney Janis Gallery, photograph Colten. The two figures in the foreground represent Rousseau and Odilon Rédon, then President of Society of Indépendants.

de Gourmont and introduced by the latter to Guillaume Apollinaire, who became his most enthusiastic and authoritative supporter. Here I should like to recall the epitaph that Apollinaire wrote for Rousseau's tomb, which after a lapse of forty years is still witness to the affection he bore him:

Hear us, kindly Rousseau.

We greet you,

Delaunay, his wife, Monsieur Quéval and I.  
Let our baggage through the Customs to the sky,

We bring you canvas, brush and paint of ours,  
During eternal leisure, radiant

As you once drew my portrait you shall paint  
The face of stars.

(Translated by Bertha Ten Eyck James)

Even to enumerate some of Rousseau's paintings—the *Self-Portrait*, the *Centenary of Independence*, the *Sleeping Gypsy*, the *Country Wedding*, the *Snake-Charmer*, the *Poet and His Muse*—is to evoke a host of memories of the days when the good *Douanier* was not yet the fashion. Only a few of us admired him, and our admiration had no practical end in view; whereas nowadays all too many newcomers have swelled our ranks. I devoted a whole chapter of my book, *Pittura metafisica*, published in 1919, to Henri Rousseau. At that time, just after the futurist experiment, we were trying to lead Italian painting back to its original complex elements, and the *Douanier* seemed to us to point the way. I began by saying that Rousseau, more than anyone else, had achieved our justifiable desire to guide painting back to its essential purposes. Upon his death in September, 1910, there was general amazement that he could have raised himself, entirely by his own efforts, to a position of such prominence. I have neither time nor space to quote all that has been written about this artist. I should like, however, to recall that Apollinaire and Soffici, both of whom appreciated his simplicity, humanity and candid emotions, defined him as the modern Paolo Uccello.

One of Rousseau's chief merits is the importance he gave to the *Indépendants*. Finding himself at the comparatively late age of forty,

Henri Rousseau,  
*Centenary of Independence*,  
1892, oil,  
formerly collection  
Alex Voemal, Düsseldorf



Giotto, Resurrection of Lazarus, 1303-05,  
fresco, Arena Chapel, Padua



he proceeded to paint entirely as his own impulse directed, and with extraordinary delicacy. His greatest asset is his rich coloring, full of happiness and grace. The soft tones, the bright lights and the simple, candid joy of his pictures transport the spectator and work upon his imagination. Rousseau has not the stuff of a great man, but what is important about an artist is his ability to create a world—large or small—of his own. Rousseau did create such a world, limited in scope, but completely individual and hence imperishable.

When art criticism abandons its errors, it will embrace just such a concept of clarity and universality in a true work of art.

The need to return to universality in painting led us back to the art of Giotto, Paolo Uccello and Piero della Francesca. In years of anxious searching, we found in the work of these painters examples of severity and condensation of expression. I myself am convinced that all great innovators in art have turned back to the masters of the past for their inspiration, for that can come only from established achievement.

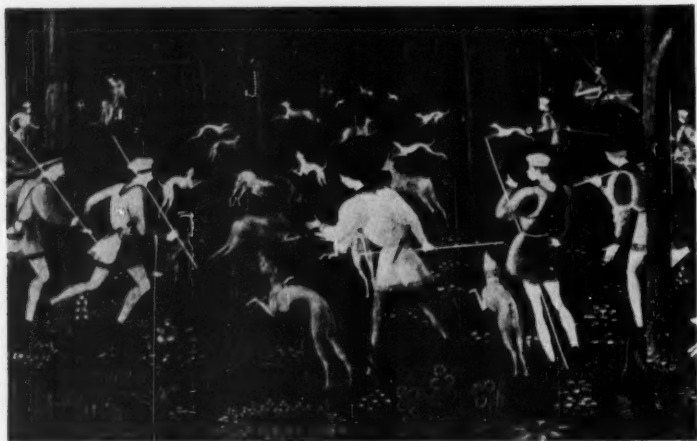
Here I may refer to an article entitled "Conversation about Giotto," which I published in *La Voce* in March, 1916. I sought first of all to define Giotto's ideals and the lesson his painting held for me across the enormous gap of the centuries that lay between us.

Giotto's plastic development from the Ognissanti Madonna, considered his earliest work, to the frescoes of the Arena Chapel in Padua and those of Santa Croce in Florence, is along the lines of an ever-increasing freedom. Within the magical silence of his forms our contemplation finds rest, and little by little ecstasy overwhelms us. In sharp, decisive lines monks and

shepherds, soldiers and patricians, noblewomen and saints create a solemn, tranquil atmosphere. A murmur runs from the center to the periphery of his awe-inspiring, cubically interlocked world, and everything is transformed into architecture. Under the broad backs of figures huddled up or amorously bent over, under the spreading chests and bellies, the surrounding masses expand and throw into relief a plastic drama which takes place beyond the limits of any particularizing psychology.

If we seek the cause of such tragic emotion, we shall find it in the sparing ochre and *terra verde* laid between lines that cross one another like complementary colors. The beauty of these marvelous paintings seems to be built up around a few focal points, about which play delicate arabesques. The axes of his compositions lie in the few horizontals, which intersect the diagonals to form acute and obtuse angles that are their transverse extensions. Every plastic composition has its primary and its secondary centers, like so many stars in the sky, but each composition follows this law in its own manner according to the necessities of the artist's spirit. In this scheme, which he could never have derived from anyone else, Giotto showed forth his individual soul. In him the Christian ideal took on concrete shape in such a way that ideal and form illumine one another. To say that Giotto was a mystic is less than meaningless. All the painters of his time were mystics, in a manner of speaking, but none can stand comparison with him. It is in concrete representation, not in abstract conception, that we find the basis for our admiration and for the spiritual delight that Giotto affords us. And let us repeat: the supreme beauty of Giotto's work lies not in his reasoning but in his imagination.



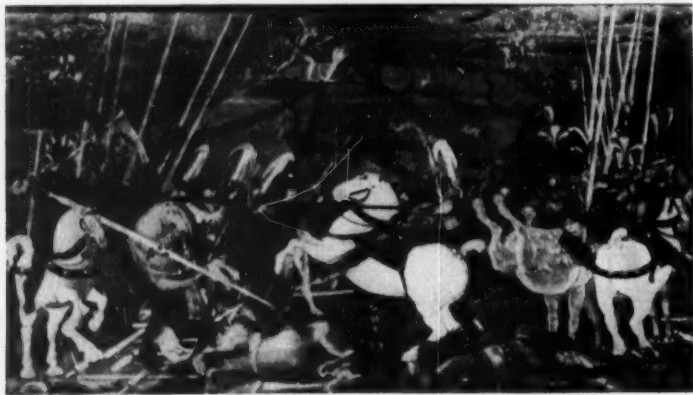


Paolo Uccello, *The Hunt*,  
detail, tempera,  
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

At about the same time, I wrote another article in *La Voce* on Paolo Uccello, again with the purpose of bridging the centuries between us. Uccello, born in Pratovecchio in 1396, was attracted to painting from his early youth and concentrated his attention on the geometrical laws which underlie all the figurative arts. He was a student of nature and one of those rare souls endowed with a true inventive talent. In his time, with the exception of the young Masaccio, Andrea del Castagno and Domenico Veneziano—artists who worked with masses well supported by a powerful combination of linear and tonal movements—painting was under the influence of a misunderstood kind of platonism, which led to the creation of literary abstractions divorced from visual reality. The predominance of spirit over form also made for uncertainties and unevenness of style. Under these circumstances, Paolo Uccello was one of the few painters capable of bearing the burden of genuine and severe poetic beauty. His nickname *Uccello*

(bird) came from his expert and unprecedented treatment of nightingales, blackbirds, cuckoos and finches. But we have no way of discovering the spiritual process by which he became so active an inventor and explorer. We can only trace the progress he made from the spacious linearity of the fresco of Sir John Hawkwood in the Cathedral at Florence to the *Hunt* at Oxford, from the youthful symbolism of the *Profanation of the Host* at Urbino to the battle scenes representing the *Rout of San Romano* in the Uffizi, the Louvre and the National Gallery, and to the frescoes of Santa Maria Novella.

Let us look at the Uffizi *Battle*. In the background armed men are coming down the furrowed hills. Hounds as white as metal run through the green fields, and in the foreground we see huge horses, their movements as stiff as those on a carrousel. The voluminous forms make for synthesis and simplicity, and by means of large areas of green and orange the masses attain unprecedented qualities of space and movement.



Paolo Uccello,  
*The Rout of San Romano*,  
c. 1455, tempera, Uffizi, Florence



Paolo Uccello, *The Flood*, detail, c. 1445-55, fresco, S. Maria Novella, Florence



Looking at the frescoes of the cloisters of Santa Maria Novella, we enter still further into the significance of Uccello's austere style. Here in its final, definitive form is a liquidity which seems to bathe and immerse his human figures in profound solitude. In the *Flood*, the *Creation*, the *Sacrifice of Noah*, the movements of the figures coming to us through the porous plaster of the frescoed wall gradually transform the material with balanced equations of reality. Paolo Uccello was one of the most truly wise and good artists of all the centuries; our own age would be ungrateful were we to forget or ignore him. We may well remember this martyr to poverty, to whom art was the greatest of prizes, upon which, he believed, we must continually set our minds, lest at the end of our journey our tongue be turned to stone.

In the last thirty years, the reputation of Piero della Francesca has come to the fore; again we felt it necessary to define our attitude towards this painter, also. We wanted to persuade our fellow artists that the time had come to transcend the abstract notions of "tradition" and "modernity," to forsake the artificial conflict that had been built up by the theorists of the nineteenth century between the art of the present and that of the past. As far back as the first World War, I tried in my book, *Pittura metafisica*, to set forth something of the wonderful balance that we find in the works of Piero della Francesca. This followed quite naturally upon the attempt I had made in 1916 to reevaluate Paolo Uccello.

Here I should like to quote from my book, *The Renewal of the Arts in Italy*: "Two great

artists of the past, Paolo Uccello and Piero della Francesca, have appeared over and over again in my writing as the tutelary deities of modern art. The search for true poetry and true metaphysics implied for me a channeling of artistic effort in a contemporary direction, taking into account the just relationship between intellect and reality, which in one way or another has always characterized the best periods of Italian painting. We must get away from the abstract meanings of tradition and modernity and establish our concepts on a more concrete basis."

Here our point becomes clearer if we look at the work of Piero, which has such significance for us. At the age of nineteen, he left his native village of Borgo San Sepolcro and went to Florence. There he studied under Domenico Veneziano and acquired a complete mastery of the technique of painting. In Piero's work creative power and artistic taste are allied in a most unusual manner. He quietly achieved a metaphysical reality that endowed his figures with the calm, virile quality of sculpture. This we can observe in the Borgo San Sepolcro *Resurrection*, the portraits of Federico and Battista Sforza in the Uffizi, and especially in the *Madonna and Saints* of the Brera Gallery in Milan and the frescoes in the choir of San Francesco at Arezzo, his most important paintings.

Let us examine more closely the San Francesco frescoes which, painted between 1454 and 1466, depict episodes from the Legend of the True Cross. The first time that I saw them I was particularly interested by the scene of the digging up of the three crosses and the identification of the true one. Here the outstanding figures are those of a man leaning on a plow,

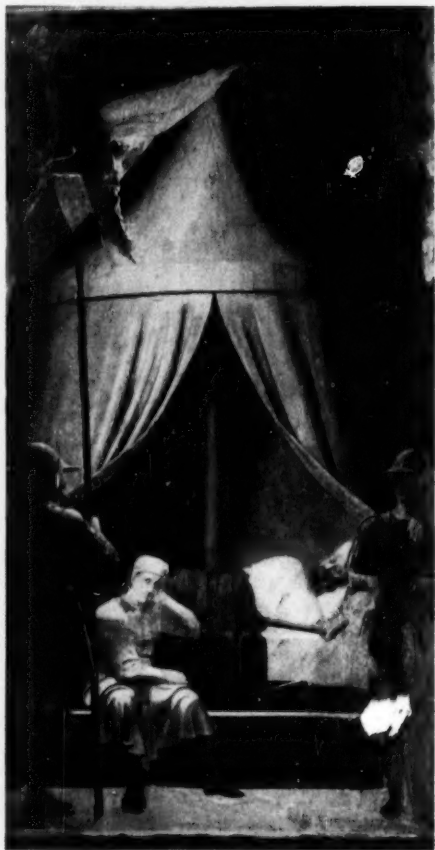


Piero della Francesca,  
Finding and Identification of  
the True Cross,  
1454-66, fresco,  
S. Francesco, Arezzo

and that of the Empress Helena who anxiously looks on at the work of the men digging. Piero's powerful manner is further evident in the scene of the *Meeting between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, in the *Defeat of Chosroes* and the *Dream of Constantine*—where, as the critic Roberto Longhi has pointed out, gothic legend and classic antiquity come together. In the *Defeat of Chosroes*, the most striking feature is provided by the backs of the white horses. Victor and vanquished compose a spatial arabesque, intersected by lances, axes, clubs and banners. Originality and balance characterize this scene.

Piero della Francesca seems to have deliberately excluded from his painting every dramatic element in order to give an impression of serene, architectonic strength. His figures arise from a strange power of abstraction and culminate in a lyrical vibration of light that surrounds their bodies and gives them solidity. To use Leonardo da Vinci's term, painting for Piero is really a mental exercise. His works are mild and gentle, but without the least shade of pathos. He carries the onlooker away not through his feelings but through the harmony of the forms he constructs. Along with this goes his treatment of space—a matter entirely distinct from perspective. These are the fundamentals of his painting, applicable both to his subject matter and to the quality and intensity of his expanding shapes and colors. In his compositions Piero also made use of the golden section and of the rules governing triangles and diagonals.

Piero della Francesca, *Dream of Constantine*,  
1454-66, fresco, S. Francesco, Arezzo



Much more might be said, but I shall conclude with this statement: The painting of Piero della Francesca grows out of an intimate union between instinct and intellect, and hence it expresses power, order and spiritual light.

Having explained the reasons for my estimate of these artists, I believe that I have also made clear the basis of my own painting and its guiding principles, and my quarrel with the tendencies that, under various names, have given rise to new academies just as dangerous in their way as that which formerly claimed on mistaken grounds to uphold tradition. I do not wish to be either a "realist" or an "abstractionist," in the ordinary sense of those terms, though I stand up for the existence of both realistic values and those of the imagination.

This was the purpose of our futurist experiment: to fit the art of the present into its place in history. I should like to be able to go into further detail for the benefit of those who, in matters of art, stand midway between belief and skepticism and who smile at our cultural adventures. The fact remains, nevertheless, that our study of the essential nature of painting led

us, on the one hand, to appreciate the example of the old masters and, on the other, to seek a more solid ground of our own without falling into the aberration of overprizing originality. The problem thus raised is a complex one, and because of its very complexity we maintain that good painting is not just a matter of chance. We propose discipline and hard work; these require of the artist a strong spiritual control that causes him to put truth before material gain. We are not unaware of the multiplicity of artistic tendencies, each striving to be more startling than its predecessor. Many painters believe that only by adopting a new and extravagant manner can they engage the interest of the public. For our part, we insist instead upon a kind of painting which springs from genuine imagination, which never departs from the essential purpose of creative activity and which holds within itself the continuity and the future of art.

**NOTE:** A loan exhibition of Rousseau's paintings, including several not seen before in America, will be shown at the Sidney Janis Gallery Nov. 5th-Dec. 22nd for the benefit of the Cerebral Palsy Society of New York.

Carlo Carrà, *The Engineer's Mistress*, 1921, oil, 21 5/8 x 15 3/4",  
Gianni Mattioli Foundation, Milan, courtesy Museum of Modern Art





## RELIGIOUS ART AND THE MODERN ARTIST

*Father M. A. Couturier, O. P.*

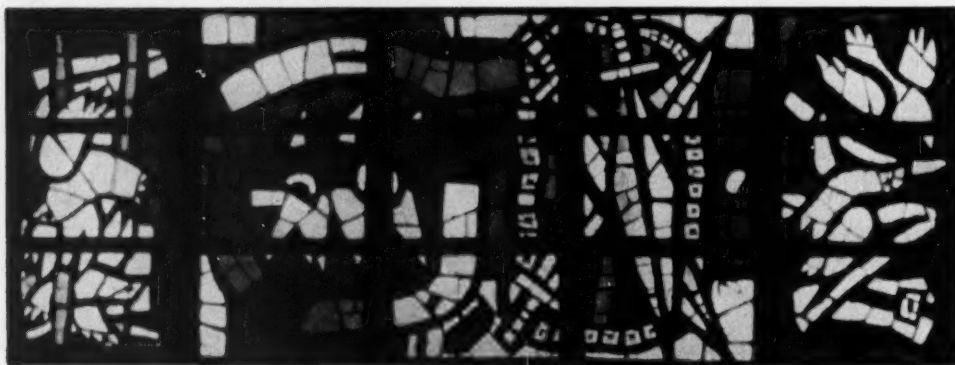
IN August, 1950, the church of Assy was consecrated by His Excellency the Bishop of Annecy. The Matisse chapel at Vence and the church of Audincourt were consecrated this past summer by the Bishops of Nice and of Besançon, respectively. In these religious structures, the greatest masters of modern art—Bonnard, Matisse, Rouault, Braque, Léger, Chagall, Miro, Lurçat, Lipchitz, Henri Laurens—have been able to work in complete freedom.

It was not theoretical reasons of doctrine but on the contrary considerations of a primarily

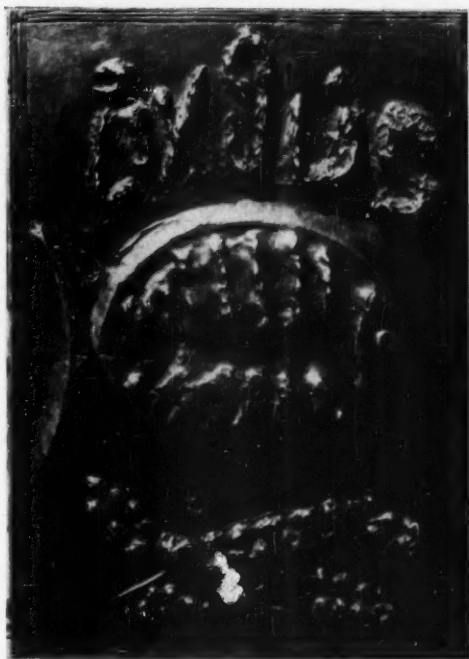
practical nature that impelled us to summon these artists. We called on them purely and simply because they were the greatest—because, in fact, they were the best painters and sculptors of our day. We believed that it was our duty to procure for God and our Faith the best art of the present. That was our first reason.

We were tired of always seeing in our churches the most mediocre examples of painting and sculpture. In the long run, we thought, this mediocrity could only result in seriously altering the religious psychology of clergy and worship-

(Above and below): Fernand Léger, Stained glass windows for Church at Audincourt







Georges Braque, *Tabernacle door*, bronze,  
*Nôtre-Dame de Toute-Grâce*, Assy,  
courtesy Liturgical Arts Society

pers alike. We were also aware that unbelievers, comparing these works to the great Christian art of the past, would inevitably question the vitality of a Faith and a Church that could remain content with them. For every society always has, not only the governments, but likewise the artists that it deserves.

In the second place we thought that by turning to these masters we might be able to bring about a renaissance of Christian art in general. Here again there was no theoretical program: we only faced the facts. For us, it seemed indeed a fact that Christian art in every country was dead—dead in the same sense that one says, for example, that Latin is a dead language. This does not mean that it is no longer in use, for of course we know that Latin is the official language of the Catholic Church, used every day in our teaching and our liturgy. Nevertheless Latin remains a dead language, because it is no longer either evolving nor renewing its structure; it is a language incapable of assimilating any new form.

In the same way, one is forced to admit that Christian art is dead. In spite of the fact that during the past century extraordinary changes have been taking place in every aspect of life—spiritual, social and material—we still see Christian art constantly repeating the old styles of past centuries, slavishly rebuilding romanesque, gothic

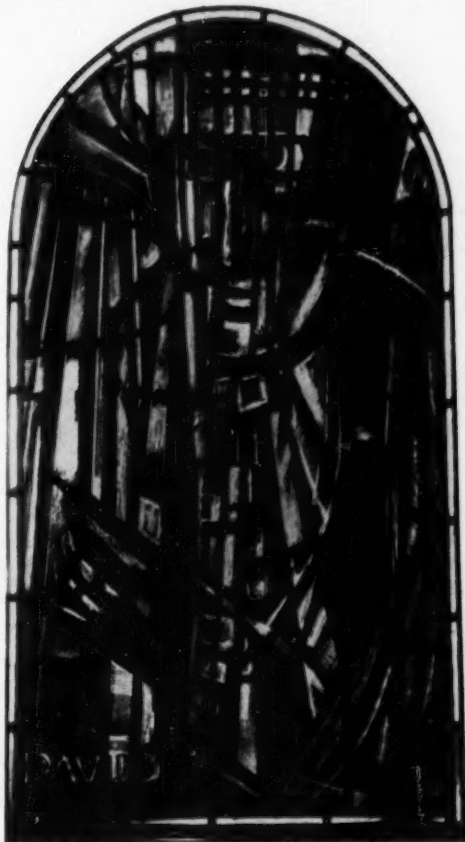
or renaissance churches, never utilizing modern forms until they are already outmoded—or else employing them artificially, in a senile fashion, in repetitions, copies or borrowings that lack any spontaneous spark of life.

For more than a century, imagination—the true innovator of all new forms—has remained completely outside of, and alien to, the Church. Life withdrew from the Church. The only great Christian artist alive, Rouault, had to wait until he reached the age of eighty before seeing one of his works admitted to a church—and that was actually at Assy.

These are very simple, very concrete facts which no serious person can controvert. I should add that never before in the entire history of Christianity has such a situation prevailed.

Under these circumstances, if we wanted to work effectively towards a renaissance of Christian art, we had to go in quest of life where it existed: that is, among those who are

Jean Bazaine, *King David*, stained glass window, *Nôtre-Dame de Toute-Grâce*, Assy, courtesy Liturgical Arts Society





today the true masters of living art. For it is only life that can be born, or reborn; and when rebirth is in question, one needs life which is as vigorous as the preceding decay has been long and profound. In such a crisis, lesser talents would never suffice. Talents of that calibre certainly exist in our Christian circles, nor should they be deprecated. In periods and societies where traditions are still *living* traditions, minor artists are enough to ensure the continuous production of whatever art religion may require. But they are not adequate to bring about a resurrection; that is entirely beyond their powers.

On the other hand, great artists—truly great men—are never very numerous. One must take those there are, wherever one can find them.

Thus the first difficulty arose: the majority of these artists were not religious men, or only very superficially so. Some people, in fact, have accused us of apparently preferring to seek unbelievers rather than believers for our projected renaissance. This is not quite accurate. For the record, we have consistently both believed and stated that the ideal way in which to revive Christian art would always be to have geniuses who happened to be saints at the same time. But under the actual conditions, since men of this kind did not exist, we believed that if we were to effect a revival of liturgical art it would be safer to turn to geniuses without faith than to believers without talent.

Still, this posed a real problem. One could certainly look for strong, vital works from men of this sort; but could one expect truly *religious* works? Could we expect from these modern masters art which would also have authenticity as *religious* art?

We believed that we could, and for the following reasons. The first one stems directly out of what has just been stated above. Our only choice was between life and death; we thought that it would really be a great thing to have once again in our churches religious themes expressed through living forms—that is to say, to re-introduce living art, the life of art, into the Church. As the old proverb says, "Where there's life, there's hope." One may always hope to baptize the living; one never baptizes the dead. Where there is no natural life, there can be no supernatural life; and where there is no *living* art, no sacred art can be possible either, for actually there is no art at all.

We had further reasons for our confidence. In the first place, isn't it jumping at conclusions to say so quickly, "These men are not Christians"? After all, how does one know? Remember what St. Augustine said of the Church: "Many are outside who believe themselves to be within, and many are within who believe themselves to be without." At any rate the majority of these artists, being French, belong to one stock and come from Christian families. They have been baptized and have had a Christian

upbringing; their imagination and sensibility continue to bear its stamp.

Furthermore, it is a grave error to think that art's true sources lie in the realm of conscious choices, deliberate decisions and rational thought. This is not true. For every artist, the purest and most indispensable fountainheads arise from a certain inward realm in which reason and will lose their power—precisely from the secret and persistent realm of childhood. There lies that enchanted domain which great artists cherish throughout their lives as the purest, most precious part of themselves. Within that domain and in that obscure shade the deep, mysterious Christian sources never entirely deteriorate.

Matisse once said to Picasso, "You well know that what we all strive to recapture in our art is the atmosphere of our First Communion."

Still another reason is that expressed by Delacroix when he said, "One should always bet on genius." Great artists are always *inspired*, and by the same token they have a natural predisposition for spiritual intuitions. I would say the same of a certain Spirit which "bloweth where it listeth. And you hear its voice, but you know not whence it comes nor whither it goes." No matter how casually one may have followed such matters, one cannot help having noticed how the gifts of great artists operate in them in a manner exactly analogous to the workings of what theology calls the "gifts of the Holy Spirit," which inspire the mystics and the saints, leading them infallibly to their goals without any rational explanation.

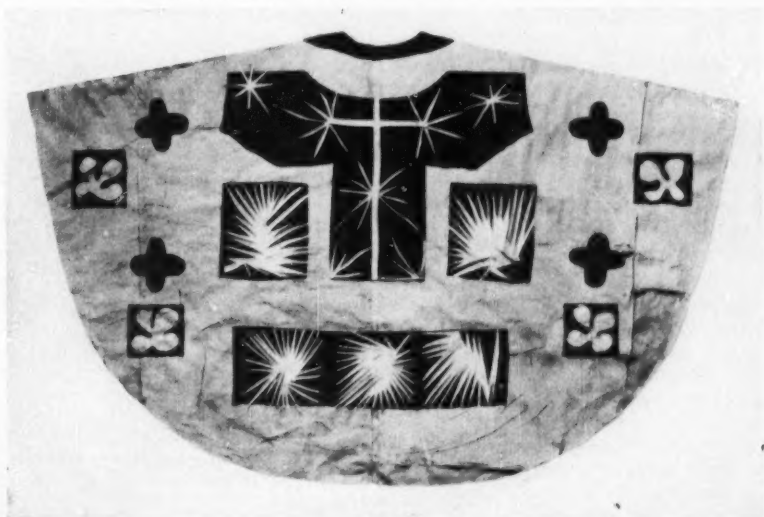
These priceless analogies, which hold true in every period, are of still greater significance in our own times. More than one art before "modern" art has become the exclusive province of immediate, intuitive forces, to the detriment of whatever previously existed in the way of tradition, craftsmanship, rational discipline or realistic representation. In its essence and its operation an art of this sort is closer to being a rigorously "spiritual" art. Already freed from naturalist subjugation, it is by the same token more easily capable of becoming a "sacred" art. At any rate, it is much more likely to become so than an art derived from the Italian renaissance, which was both pagan and naturalistic. Such an art goes back to the purest origins. Matisse once said, "I have always felt at home among medieval things; it is they which translate my emotions in the most direct fashion."

Finally, it was our conviction that even that very ignorance of religious matters with which one or another of these artists has been reproached could actually serve a useful purpose for a renaissance. In the midst of an age grown mature, it could provide a freshness, a virginity of thought and feeling, an atmosphere in which Christian themes might begin to renew themselves. And it must be said that our expectations have been fully justified.



Interior of Dominican Chapel of the Rosary, Vence, showing on the altar crucifix and candlesticks; left, stained glass window; and right, St. Dominic in glazed and painted tile, all by Henri Matisse. Photograph Hélène Adant, courtesy Museum of Modern Art

Henri Matisse, design for chasuble, for Chapel at Vence (from Chapelle du Rosaire des Dominicaines de Vence, Paris, 1951) similar to the one shown on the cover



All this in an era so lacking in hope has required adventurous experiment. The enormous amount of attention which the news of our initial projects has attracted throughout the world has indicated to us that our hopeful attitude has answered a need.

As long as the ecclesiastical authorities will repose their confidence in us, we shall continue to follow the same path. We believe this path to be the best and most direct and, in the long run, the most certain.

## Notes on the Churches

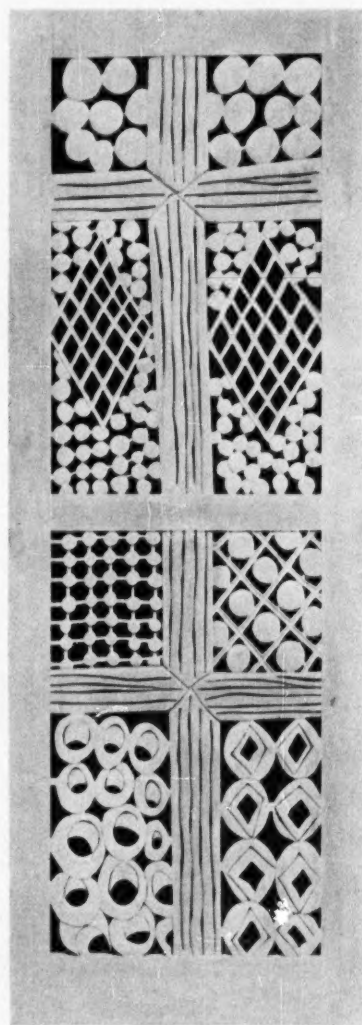
**ASSY:** The church of Assy (Haute-Savoie) was begun in 1937. The war considerably delayed the work, and it was not completed until 1950.

Supervision and responsibility for the enterprise were assumed by Canon Devémy. The architect was Maurice Novarina; the artistic advisor, Father Couturier. The principal artists who collaborated were Bonnard, Rouault, Matisse, Braque, Léger, Lipchitz, Chagall, Lurçat, Bazaine, G. Richier. Bonnard painted an altarpiece of St. Francis de Sales. Rouault designed five windows, which were executed by Paul Bony. Matisse did a ceramic altarpiece of St. Dominic. Braque made a bronze bas-relief for the tabernacle doors. Léger composed the mosaic on the façade, showing the Litanies of the Virgin. Lipchitz did a statue of the Virgin. Lurçat designed a tapestry for the choir showing the Woman of the Apocalypse. Chagall, though commissioned to do a mural for the Baptistry, has not yet completed the work. Germaine Richier carved the sculptured Crucifix of the High Altar. Bazaine executed three windows, and others were designed by Berçot, Brianchon, Bony, Father Couturier, Adeline Hebert-Stevens and Marguerite Huré executed additional windows.

**VENCE:** The chapel, constructed for the Dominican Sisters by Henri Matisse, was begun two years ago, but for two years before that Matisse had devoted almost all his energies to it. The work was completed this past summer and the church was dedicated on June 25th.

One after the other, Matisse completed the windows, the great tile wall decorations, a sculptured Crucifix and door of the Confessional, metalwork (chandeliers, ciborium, etc.), liturgical vestments, ceramics for the exterior (the Virgin and Child and the Virgin and St. Dominic), the forged iron spire bearing the cross and the bell, the blue and white composition of the roof, the marble pavement and the slatework of the interior. Principal participants were Brothers Rays-siguiet, O.P., for the architecture, and M. Milon de Peillon. Paul Bony executed the windows. The architectural supervisor was A. Perret.

**AUDINCOURT:** The church at Audincourt (Doubs), intended for a population entirely made up of laborers, was undertaken by the parish priest, M. Prenel. It was dedicated September 16th, 1951. Principal collaborators were Fernand Léger, who designed seventeen stained-glass windows, which go all the way around the building and illustrate the general theme of the Instruments of the Passion; Bazaine, whose mosaic on the façade represents the Sacred Heart; and Joan Miro, who was responsible for the decoration of the Baptistry, a circular edifice ornamented from top to bottom with stained-glass windows devoted to the traditional symbolism of the Baptism. The architect was Maurice Novarina; Father Couturier was artistic advisor.



Henri Matisse, Confessional door, carved wood, Chapel, Vence, photograph M. Bérard, courtesy Museum of Modern Art

# ORIGINS AND TRENDS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

*Matthew Nowicki*

I SUSPECT that I shall no longer provoke you as much as I should by opening with a statement that some time ago, our design became a style. No matter how ingeniously we dodge the unpleasant issue, it comes at us with full force in thousands of creations of the contemporary designer. A style, with all the restrictions, disciplines, limitations and blessings that we usually associate with the term. A style in the similarities between designs which differ basically in the purpose of their use and destination, subordinating to its demands a refrigerator or a motor car, a factory or a museum. A style which perhaps follows sales, quoting Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., just as form followed function, in the words of Greenough, and as renaissance architecture followed antique models in the work of Palladio. A style as pronounced, as defined, more limited perhaps, and as legitimate for our times as the style of the renaissance was in its day.

In the growing maturity and self-consciousness of our century, we cannot escape recognition of this fact, and we have to realize what it implies. We can no longer avoid this term "style" simply because it brings to our minds unpleasant memories. We cannot keep on pretending that we are able to solve our problems without a precedent in form.

We have to realize that in the overwhelming majority of modern design, form follows *form* and not *function*. And even when a form results from a functional analysis, this analysis follows a pattern that leads to a discovery of the same function, whether in a factory or a museum. Approached in a certain way, the answer to every architectural problem is a flexible space, with no reason why one flexible space should be different from another, and many practical reasons why they should be alike.

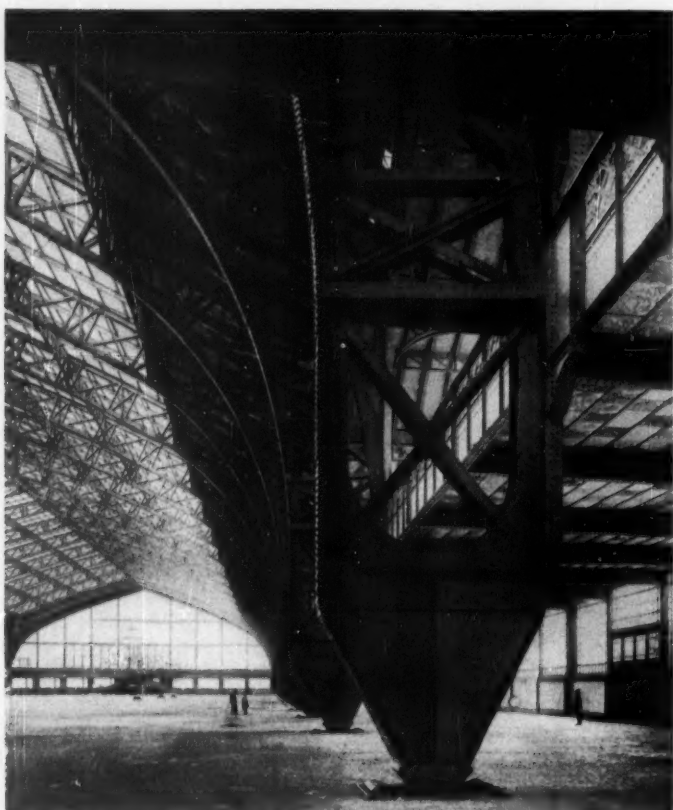
In saying all this, I am not advocating diversity in design for its own sake. Such a diversity is just a confirmation of the rule of regimentation that always is the result of a style. The more one attempts to escape one's period, the more one becomes part of it. The constructive diversity that provides strength to an expanding and virile civilization is the result of creative sensitivity to the eternally changing circumstances where "every opportunity stands alone."

This sensitivity is the main source of something for which I have no better word than freshness. Freshness is a physical part of youth, and youth disappears with time. This is the law of life, equally true in the case of an individual or a civilization. Freshness can be preserved if its source depends not on the physical state of being young, but on the consciousness of its origin. Some individuals preserve this creative freshness in their maturity. Those are the great artists. Some civilizations preserve this freshness for ages and then become great cultures. For although maturity aims at perfection, and the stride towards perfection must end with an unchanging standard of classical excellence, consciousness of the source of freshness can provide a magnified scope to this stride. The magnitude of this scope is the measure of ambitions and strength of a civilization, and the prophecy of its future achievements.

Thinking in terms of the contemporary, or should I say modern, period of design, we realize that it has passed its early youth. The experiments with form, with the new space concept, the playfulness with the machine to live in, the machine to look at or to touch, in architecture, painting and sculpture are more remote from us than the time-span alone would indicate. There was a freshness in those youthful days of the esthetic revolution, a physical freshness of a beginning. There was a diversity in those days of forms that grew without any direct precedent in form.

I speak of architecture because it incorporates the full field of design. In its changes we can discover those that affected interior design, industrial design, problems of organized landscape and others, with or without a separate name. And it is these changes of the architectural concept that I propose to analyze with the intention of establishing our present position in their chain. From this analysis of changes I will not develop any law or analogy, nor will I make predictions on what the coming change will be. I propose to define our present position because this is our strategic point of departure for the investigation of the full field of opportunity that lies within our period. In order to define our present stage, I shall try to trace it to its origins.





Frame structure: Ferdinand Dutert, Hall of Machinery, Paris Exposition, 1889

It seems to me that the beginning of modern architecture has its roots in the domestic structure of the late renaissance. It was then that the problem of human comfort was rediscovered. Functionalism in terms of the importance of good living was introduced, along with a number of technical gadgets of which the stove in Fontainebleau was probably a vanguard. Architecture descended from its pedestal of heroism and rapidly started to grow human and even bourgeois. In France, after the death of Louis XIV, the despotic *Roi Soleil*, the private residence "building boom" produced a plan wherein areas of different use were defined and located with regard to one another. This new type of plan differed from its predecessor, in which a sequence of rectangular, round, oval or otherwise-shaped interiors had a changing use, and one ate, slept or entertained in any one of them, according to a passing or a more permanent fancy. This change was not the beginning of functionalism—since architecture always had to satisfy a function—but was rather the beginning of its modern interpretation.

Renouncing heroism, architecture diminished its scale, becoming cut to the size of an ordinary man. A comparison between the Palace

of Versailles and the Petit Trianon would provide a good illustration of this change. In this alteration of the predominant scale and the introduction of problems of comfort, we can find the beginning of our architecture. These changes, essential as they were, however, could not alone produce the new form. Other factors were finally to complete the picture. One of them was expressed by the German architect, Karl-Friedrich Schinkel, in 1825 after his visit to the industrialized Manchester in his famous question, "Why not a new style?" The eternal desire for change was responsible for violent shifts of the attitude towards form throughout the nineteenth century. To illustrate this violence and its extremes, I would like to quote two striking and not very well-known examples. In the early years of the century, a French archeologist proposed a system for destroying the gothic cathedrals, considered in the days of the Empire as edifices of barbarism. His suggestion was to cut a groove at the base of the limestone columns, to surround them with piles of wood and then to set them on fire. The archeologist was convinced that under this treatment, each unsavory structure would crumble "in less than ten minutes," relieving civilization of its shameful presence.



A few decades later Ruskin, paving the way for the Pre-Raphaelite movement, wrote in his *Modern Painters* that no public funds should be spent to purchase paintings later than Raphael, as the spirit of art was confined to the medieval period and had been replaced by the superficial technology of a craft.

Out of these shifts of sympathies came the consciousness that some basic change in the eclectic sequence is indispensable. This was the psychological background to what we call the "modern" form. And although we shudder at the word *style*, Schinkel's search for its new expression contributed perhaps as much as any other factor to the birth of modern architecture. But no new form of architecture could have been created without a new structure, and psychological receptiveness had to wait its fulfilment until the structural possibilities ripened.

The middle of the last century with Paxton's Crystal Palace—its modular re-erection on a new site, its space concept of openness—created a new era. The ensuing use of cast iron, then of ferro-concrete and steel, created the spine of the new frame structure, which from then on was dominant in modern building. Independence of the partitioning wall from the frame created the free plan, and thus all elements of the new architecture were present at the beginning of our century.

What would have been the characteristics of modern architecture had it followed the direction of those early days? Its form, influenced

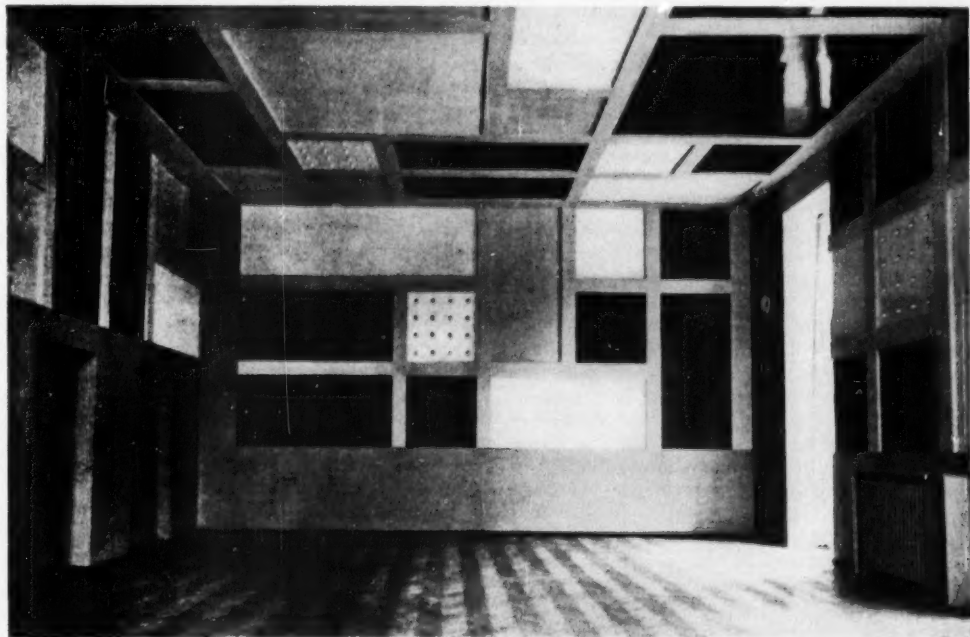
strongly by the expression of the structure, would have been intricate and detailed. The logical development of the skeleton would have accentuated the delicate ribs dividing areas of the building into supporting and supported members. The resulting form would perhaps acquire the lightness and openness of lacework filled with translucent or opaque screen. In its final state, the screen would probably be replaced with a secondary skeleton filling the lacework with still more lacework.

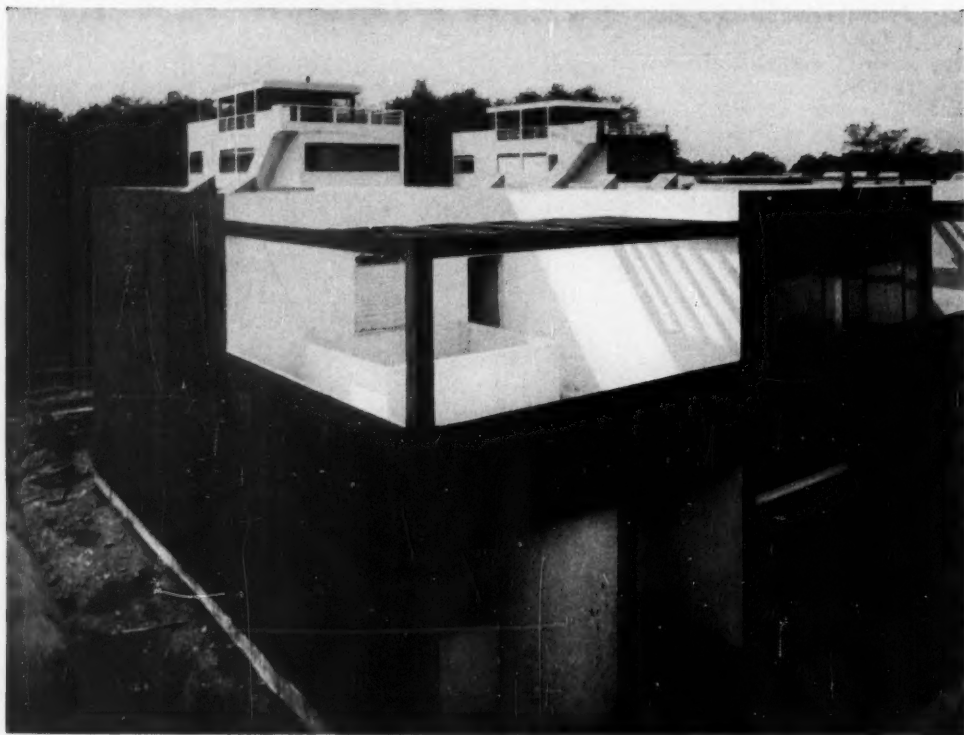
This was the way that the gothic skeleton had developed, with its stained-glass windows, and this was the road explored by Paxton, Labrouste, Eiffel and their contemporaries. Modern architecture instead chose a road different in every respect from these expectations. To understand this change of destiny we must make a digression.

Architecture with its social, economic and technical complexities never took the lead in esthetic changes. As a rule it followed other media of art. The changes of taste in the nineteenth century, already mentioned, affected architecture very profoundly, but they resulted from factors remote to the problems of building design.

The great change introduced by the renaissance can be quoted here as a striking example of the same problem. At the rebirth of the classical idiom, the medieval gothic structure reached the climax of its growth. Its further life and development were interrupted by an esthetic wave unrelated to the techniques of architecture.

**Cubist esthetics of form: Theo van Doesburg, Interior of the Aubette, Strasbourg, 1929**





*Idealized structure of the International Style: Le Corbusier, Housing Development, Pessac, 1926, courtesy Museum of Modern Art*

No structural competition to the gothic building was offered by the new style; the building methods of the renaissance were crude in comparison to the advanced standards of the medieval mason. The change in architecture followed the changing esthetic of the period, and the responsibility and credit for this change should rest with its men of letters. Thus Petrarch and Dante fathered the architecture of the renaissance.

A somewhat similar thing happened in the case of modern architecture. This time the change in taste was inspired by painters rather than by men of letters. The broad and open manner of Cézanne, the architectonic painting of synthetic cubism, introduced a new taste for purity and simplicity of form. The development of the structural skeleton mentioned above could not be molded into the new esthetic. Problems of structure and materials became secondary in a period preoccupied with the esthetics of form. One has the impression that for an architect of the early 'twenties, construction was a necessary evil. Architecture became "idealized" and "dematerialized." Colorful planes meeting at the corners of the cube emphasized the lack of material thickness. Structural detail was eliminated in conformity with the demands of purity, and the idealized structure reacted badly to time

and weather. A column in this architecture became simply a cylinder surrounded by planes, a vertical among horizontals. The contrast of this juxtaposition had to be achieved in a manner that would satisfy the intellect, so that no shape was created without a function which it should both express and serve. But in order to create the shape, a function was created or conveniently over-emphasized. Here my thoughts wander to those two massive cylinders dividing the steps of Le Corbusier's Salvation Army building in Paris. Emphasized more than any other structural element in the building, they functioned as ventilation shafts. Maybe if by now they have already become technically obsolete, they have lost their functional meaning while preserving their compositional importance. This architecture of the International Style, romantically disposed to the over-impressive technology, developed a notion which I shall call that of *functional exactitude*. Truth in architecture was considered as the exact expression of every function. When a building became technically obsolete, thus no longer ideally serving those changing functions, it was to be removed and replaced by a more efficient one.

The concept of functional exactitude found a source of decorative qualities in the inventive interpretation of human life and move-

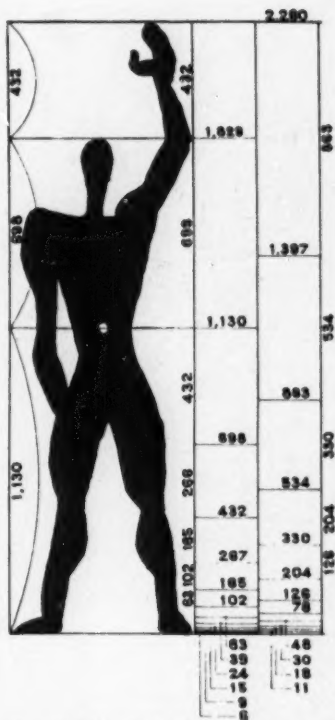
ment. One might say that this architecture became the decoration of function. The period of functional exactitude looked for its inspiration towards the physical function; psychological aspects were not considered in its philosophy. The concept of controlled environment resulted; the main purpose of architecture became the control of *physical* environment to the *physical* satisfaction of the user.

The recent changes in modern architecture are perhaps as radical as those separating the 1920's from their predecessors. True, we share our vocabulary with this period of yesterday, but the same words now have a different and often a basically opposite meaning. We still speak of functionalism, but while then it meant exactitude, now it means flexibility. Those are two opposite concepts. In our thoughts we often give priority to the psychological rather than to the physical function of humans. The concept of a short-lived structure to be removed with the rapid change of technology has been replaced by a notion of architecture that will be our contribution to the life of future generations. Le Corbusier has introduced a measure on which this contribution can be composed: the module, with its *mystique* of the golden section. This measure of good proportion is most significant for the change of values—no longer the measure of functional space nor the measure of time, but a measure of beauty. Whatever the validity of such a measure may be, it is interesting to notice that in the sequence of "time, space and architecture," the emphasis is shifting towards the last word in terms of the mystery of its art.

The free plan is replaced by the modular plan. Again these are two opposite notions. A module is the most rigid discipline to which a plan can be subjected. A modular plan in reality is the opposite of a free plan. We are no longer preoccupied with the proximities of related functions but with the nature of space that leads from one function to another. It is no longer "how quickly to get there" but "how to get there" that matters most in our plans. It seems that from a quantitative period we have jumped into a qualitative one.

These changes are not always conscious nor pronounced to the degree here indicated. It is an irresistible temptation to express such changes in the most striking manner possible, but in order to be objective one must realize that a dividing line between periods can never be geometrically defined. Such a division can better be compared to a wide ribbon which simultaneously separates and joins, like a gray belt between fields of black and white.

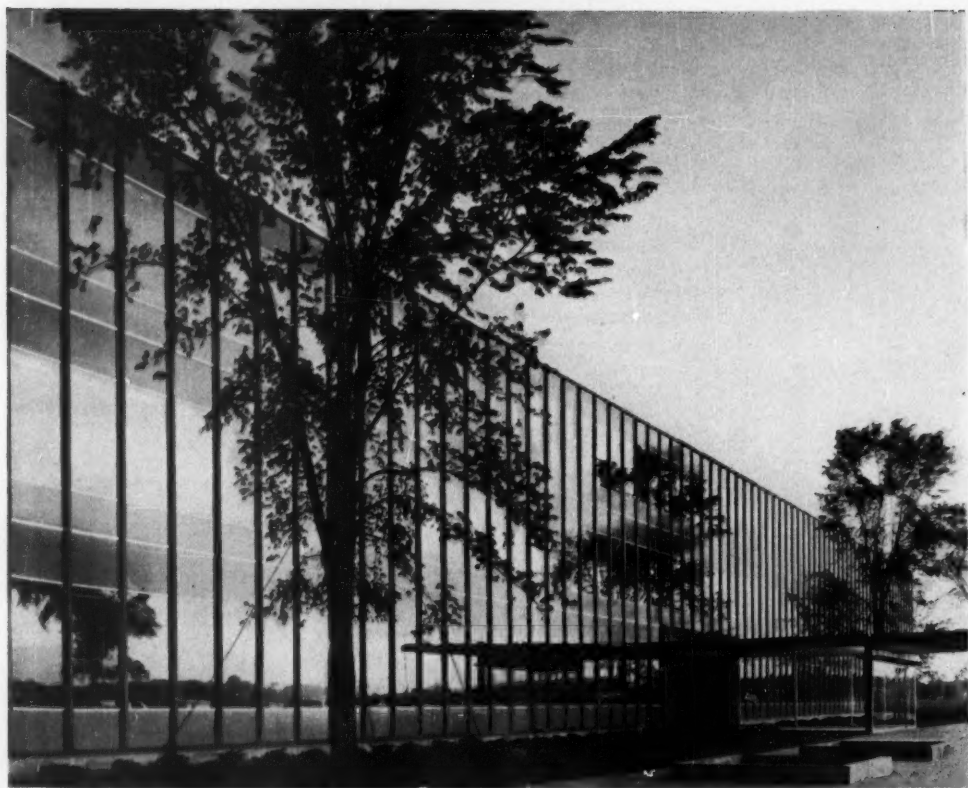
With respect to the main channels of human creation, namely invention and discovery, one might say that our present period is also different from that of yesterday. The discovery of a formal symbol of the unchanging laws of



Le Corbusier, Modulor. Scale for harmonic measurement of space based on the human figure. The two series of numbers take their respective bases from the height of a standing man (left) and from the height of a man with arm upraised (right). (From Stamo Papadaki, Le Corbusier, Macmillan, 1948.)

the universe seems to have replaced the invention of form without precedent. The eternal story of gravitation is again consciously contemplated. We are aware that the form of the discovery must change, but its object remains the same, rediscovered over and over in many ways.

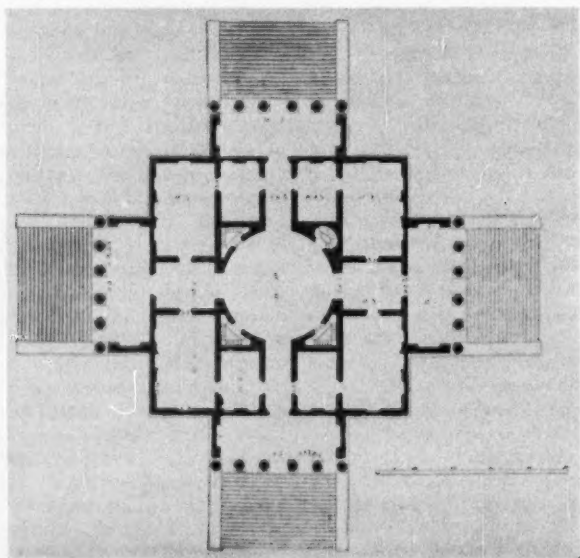
Along with these philosophical elements we also react in a different way to the technique of our craft. Architecture discovered its own medium of creation, and the difference between this medium and others. Picasso, writing recently about his "Blue Period" of 1905 and the years following, said that he had been late in finding out the difference between sculpture and painting. Maturity brings a "sense of medium," and mature architecture in the same way discovered the difference between painting and the art of organizing accessible space. As a result we now rely in our expression on the potentialities of materials and structures, almost picking up the trend of the nineteenth century. This interest in structure and material may find within the building medium decorative qualities of ornament that are much too involved for the purist of yesterday. The symbolic meaning of a support has also been rediscovered, and a steel column is used frankly



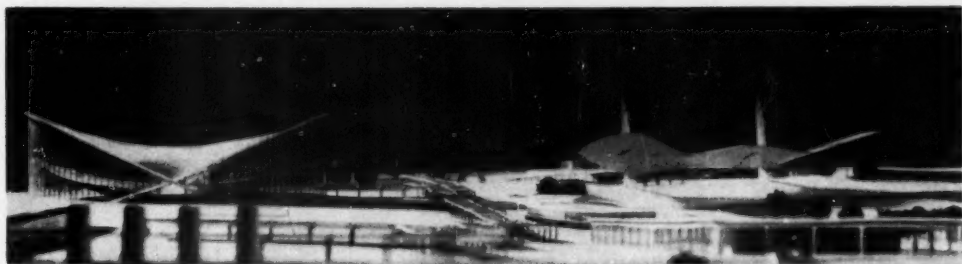
**Discipline of today's modular plan:** Saarinen-Saareinen and Associates, Engineering Staff Office Building, 1951, General Motors Technical Center, near Detroit.

Each glass unit is based on a module pattern in which the mullions serve not only to divide the windows, but also as columns forming an integral part of the structure.

**Classic discipline of renaissance architecture:**  
Andrea Palladio, Plan of Villa Rotonda, Vicenza, 1550-53







**Functional flexibility expressed through decoration of structure:** Matthew Nowicki and William Henley Deltrick, Model for additions to State Fair Grounds, Raleigh, North Carolina.

(Above:) View showing Livestock Judging Pavilion, under construction, on left; Grandstand and Exhibit Building on right. (Below:) Livestock Judging Pavilion.

as a symbol of structure even when it is not part of the structure itself. The period of functional exactitude expressed its mysterious longings for ornament through the decoration of function; our period of functional flexibility expresses them in the decoration of structure. Art tends not only to discover the truth, but to exaggerate and finally to distort it. *It may be that in this distortion lies the essence of art.*

I have described our present stage of modern design as a style. Will this style repeat the sad story of other styles, becoming an addition to the repertory of a future eclecticism? The life and decline of cultures follow an organic pattern which seems to be inevitable. But the span of life of a culture and its rebirth into another rests in the hands of the people responsible for its

creation. Where lies the future of modern design?

It seems to me that it depends on the constant effort to approach every problem with the consciousness that there is no single way of solving it. *Ars una—species mille*: This battle-cry of the renaissance should be repeated again and again. Art may be one, but it has a thousand aspects. We must face the dangers of the crystallizing style, not denying its existence but trying to enrich its scope by opening new roads for investigation and future refinements.

"Form follows function" may no longer satisfy the ambitions aroused when form becomes judged for its universal values; but sensitivity to the minute exigencies of life remains the source of creative invention, leading through the elimination of "exactitudes" to the more important and more general truth which equals beauty.



# THE DANIEL GALLERY AND MODERN AMERICAN ART

*Elizabeth McCausland*



**D**URING the opening years of our century, as is by now well known and much regretted, progressive American artists fought bitterly for a minimum of public recognition and private support. The accolades—they were few—went almost invariably to foreign painters and sculptors, especially to those whose careers centered in Paris or, less frequently, another European capital. One has only to read the art criticism in the New York press of the period from 1900 to the outbreak of the first World War to realize the depth and frustration of the vanguard's struggle against entrenched academic forces. Some account of the art world's climate at this period was given by Holger Cahill in his article, "Forty Years After: An Anniversary for the AFA" (*MAGAZINE OF ART*, May, 1949).

On this depressing scene there suddenly appeared a new champion of modern art in America, a dealer—Charles Daniel—to whom many of our leading artists pay grateful tribute even today, twenty years after the closing of his gallery in 1932. Though unrecorded in standard art histories and overshadowed by Alfred Stieglitz's almost hypnotic personality, Daniel, coming to his career as a self-taught appreciator of art, effectively befriended and helped the American advance guard.

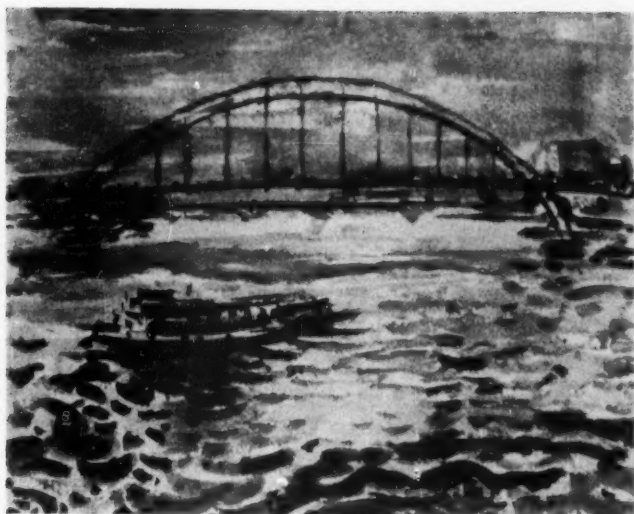
It was in December, 1913, that Daniel opened his gallery at 2 West Forty-Seventh Street, on the tenth floor of a building favored by architects and interior decorators, including Elsie de Wolfe. Man Ray designed the gallery's label, and Rockwell Kent, then a young architectural draftsman, drew its numerals. Here for over ten years, until he moved in 1924 to 600 Madison Avenue, Daniel played his role as an early champion of modern art in America.

Today Daniel's chapter in the battle for modern art must be pieced together from accounts in the magazines and newspapers of the

time, from exhibition records and the recollections of Daniel and of artists whom he exhibited and assisted financially. When his gallery closed during the depression, it was a victim of economic and social forces larger than art. Daniel's records were lost some years later, when his paintings and other possessions were seized for non-payment of rent and were subsequently dispersed at auction. Being an exhibitor of vanguard art and especially of young, not-yet-arrived artists, he did not receive much coverage in the art press during the earlier years of his gallery, and for this reason, too, the story is incomplete. Nonetheless, the surviving documents re-create the portrait of a man who loved art genuinely and allied himself, almost as if by chance, with the forward-moving trends of his time.

Daniel's contribution obviously warrants further study. Even those who are stupefied by lists of names must be impressed by the over-all calibre of the artists he helped in varying degrees, among them Preston Dickinson, Charles Demuth, Ernest Lawson, William Glackens, Maurice Prendergast, Alfred Maurer, Marsden Hartley, Max Weber, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Peter Blume, Samuel Halpert, Rockwell Kent, Charles Sheeler, Niles Spencer, Paul Burlin, Abraham Walkowitz, Leon Kroll, Stuart Davis and William Zorach. An impressive list certainly, if looked at it in the light of surviving reputation! Daniel was a dealer who knew why he liked what he liked.

The son of German-born parents, Charles Daniel with his brother operated a café and hotel on the northwest corner of Ninth Avenue and Forty-Second Street after their father had closed out his restaurant at the corner of Tenth Avenue and Twenty-Eighth Street. One day in 1906 the young Glenn Coleman, who with his father was then running a printing business, came in to have lunch at the Daniel brothers' café. Charles was much excited to learn that Coleman was studying art with Henri, and the two young men struck up a friendship. Daniel actually sat by and watched Coleman when he started his first oil. About this time, too, Daniel met Preston Dickinson and Max Kuehne. The latter was then studying with Kenneth Hayes Miller; he and Daniel used to visit exhibitions together. Daniel also read the art columns eagerly and in them found an announcement that Stieglitz was exhibiting the work of Matisse at 291. Going there to see the Matisses, he saw Marin's



John Marin, *River Effects, Paris, 1909*, watercolor, A. E. Gallatin Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art

work for the first time—this in 1910. The watercolors struck him as being very alive and lovely, and for \$95 he bought two studies of Paris bridges, *Pont Neuf* and *Pont Alexandre*.

Another personality with whom Daniel became friendly at this time was Middleton Manigault, whom he met about 1908 or 1909 through Max Kuehne. Manigault, a mythical character brought to light in 1946 in the Whitney Museum's show of "Pioneers of Modern Art in America," was also a student of Kenneth Hayes Miller, as was the cartoonist Denis Wortman, another member of the group of friends. Manigault died in 1922 at the age of thirty-five. His work shows that a genuine talent was lost. He may be said to have laid the foundations for the Daniel Gallery, for its first sale to Ferdinand Howald (who as we shall see was to become Daniel's most important patron) was Manigault's *Procession*. According to Daniel's recollection, this was in May, 1914. Manigault had had a one-man show earlier in the year, and Howald had apparently seen the painting at that time and wrote offering to buy it.

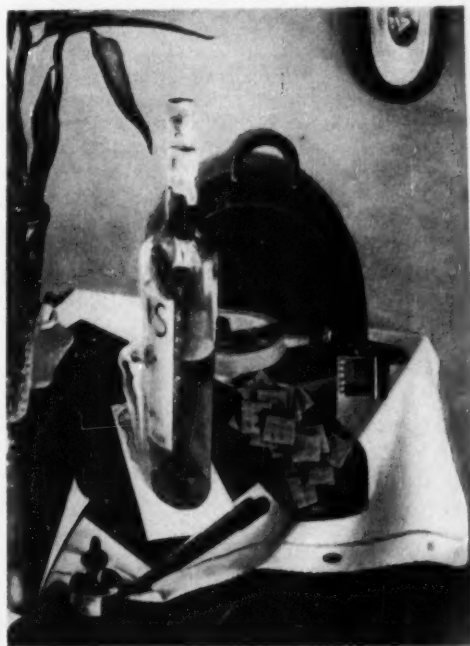
Daniel had made other connections. As early as 1908, he had bought his first painting by Ernest Lawson at Silo's auction rooms. It was a canvas twenty-five by thirty inches called *Gray Day*. Bidding started at \$10 and went up a dollar a bid. Daniel got the painting for \$22. After opening his gallery, he was to exhibit Lawson's work from about 1914 to the early 1920's.

Daniel remembers with pride that he was not taken in by the standard academic successes of the time. He comments with a certain sardonic satisfaction that Demuth watercolors which could have been had for \$25 to \$40 were to bring \$500; that a Preston Dickinson which might have been bought for \$100 was turned down

in favor of a Whistler etching at \$4,000; that a Marin bought for \$200 or \$250 brought \$900 at auction not long after.

In 1910 and 1911 Daniel bought his first Marsden Hartleys and more Marins. He bought the works of Walkowitz, and when Maurer exhibited at the Folsom Galleries in January, 1913, he bought a flower painting. Demuth, Samuel

Preston Dickinson, *Still Life with Bottle, 1929*, collection Mrs. Wolfgang S. Schwabacher, New York





Charles Demuth,  
After Sir Christopher Wren,  
1920, tempera, 23 1/2 x 19 7/16"  
Ferdinand Howald Collection,  
Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts

Halpert and Weber were others whom he bought early. These pioneer purchases seem to have vanished into limbo. Daniel met Halpert, who had been one of the first of the advanced Americans to go abroad to study, through J. J. Casey, a newspaper artist on the *American*. It was again through Max Kuehne—an important though silent factor in this chain of cause and effect—that Daniel had met Casey. Casey had gone to Paris with Daniel's aid, and there he met Halpert.

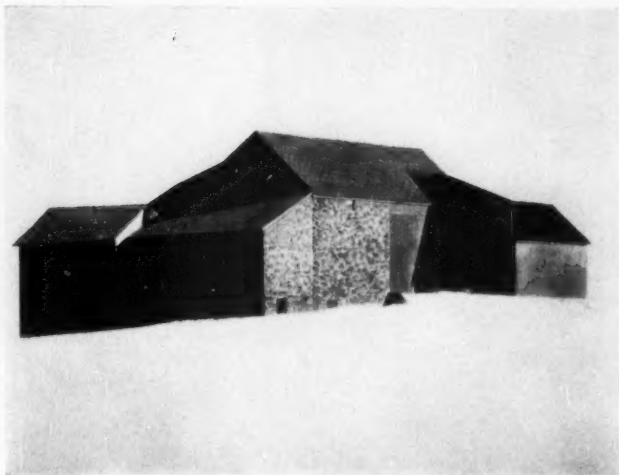
When Daniel opened his gallery on December 17th, 1913, he naturally showed the work of the men he had been collecting. In 1914 he showed, besides Manigault, Halpert,

William Schumacher, Lawson, Leon Kroll, Kuehne, Demuth, Glackens, Clagget Wilson, Stuart Davis, Dickinson, Prendergast, Zorach, "Pop" Hart and Maurer, among others. Not all his artists were winners, however. Little is known today of the work of Charles Austin Needham, which was shown in November, 1914, with favorable notice in the *International Studio*. Daniel explains that he needed something to show and thought Needham closest to Ryder. In 1915 he exhibited nine canvases by Hamilton Easter Field, which were well received, though sculpture by Robert Laurent was not mentioned. There was always difficulty in getting good ma-

Marsden Hartley,  
The Little Arroyo, Taos,  
1918, pastel,  
private collection,  
courtesy University Gallery,  
University of Minnesota,  
photograph Oliver Baker







Charles Sheeler, Bucks County Barn,  
1923, watercolor, 19 1/2 x 26",  
Whitney Museum of American Art

terial, Daniel says today. From 1918 he had but three exhibitions of Dickinson's work, and from 1923 to 1932, out two of Niles Spencer's. Kuniyoshi, he adds, was the only artist on whom he could rely. There was nothing around; the Marins were at 291, and not until Stieglitz closed his gallery in 1917 did Daniel take on Hartley.

Behind the scenes at the Daniel Gallery was the late Alanson Hartpence. An associate in the 1900's of Hartley and the poet Alfred Kreymborg, Hartpence is even less well recorded than Daniel. At one time he and Kreymborg sold music rolls for player pianos. By the end of the decade, the two had decided to risk giving up their jobs in order to devote all their time and energies to writing. They lived in a rooming house on West Fourteenth Street, where Hartley also had a room, and took many of their meals at a German bakery, Kiel's, on West Fifteenth Street, where the aged Ryder also used to go. Through Hartley the two met Stieglitz, and through Stieglitz met "Charlie" Daniel at 291 where he was buying Marins and Hartleys. Kreymborg and Hartpence each published his first book of poems in the same year, but while the former continued to make letters his profession, Hartpence turned to the visual arts. His great gift was to temper Daniel's enthusiasm. In later years, his critical sense may have become oversharper; nevertheless, it was a protection for this curious team. It has been said that Howald would buy any painting that had been recommended by Hartpence.

During the years of the first World War, Daniel kept his gallery going. Stieglitz closed 291 in 1917 and suspended publication of *Camera Work*, but Daniel kept on. Demuth, whom he had first sponsored in 1914, continued to show with him through 1925. From 1915 to 1925, Man Ray designed his catalogues. In 1916 Daniel gave a one-man show of Newfoundland subjects

to Rockwell Kent, whom he had first met in 1912 when Kent was a graduate architect; he had designed for the gallery a trademark of a cherub and a bird.

About this time Daniel started a series of exhibitions called "American Art of Today," in which in addition to his own artists he included work by men like Childe Hassam, Henri, Luks, Kenneth Hayes Miller, and Ryder while he was still alive. About 1917 he held a group exhibition of Lawson, Glackens and Prendergast. And it was in 1918, he says, that he gave Marsden Hartley a monthly advance for a year to enable Hartley to go to New Mexico and paint without worry about money matters. During these early, difficult years Arthur B. Davies, that gentle friend of revolt in the arts, was a frequent visitor to the gallery.

Daniel's support of Preston Dickinson was of long standing. He met him through a German framer named Dreher who had a shop on Forty-Third Street just off Tenth Avenue. Dickinson was then a "snappy, handsome young chap" about twenty years old. He had studied with Emil Carlsen and now was planning to go to Paris. Luckily he had a patron, an engineer named Henry Barbey, for whom Dickinson had worked as an office boy. He had about fifteen or twenty finished paintings which could be had for \$200. Money in hand, Dickinson set off for the art mecca of the day. Two years later he sent back a number of paintings, which Daniel turned over to Barbey. Daniel did not see Dickinson until the latter's return to the United States in December, 1914; the artist then went to live with his mother and sister in the Bronx and painted a number of subjects in that borough, as well as his well-known Quebec series.

About 1918 Daniel saw the work of Charles Sheeler and got in touch with him, showing his work during the early part of the 1920's.



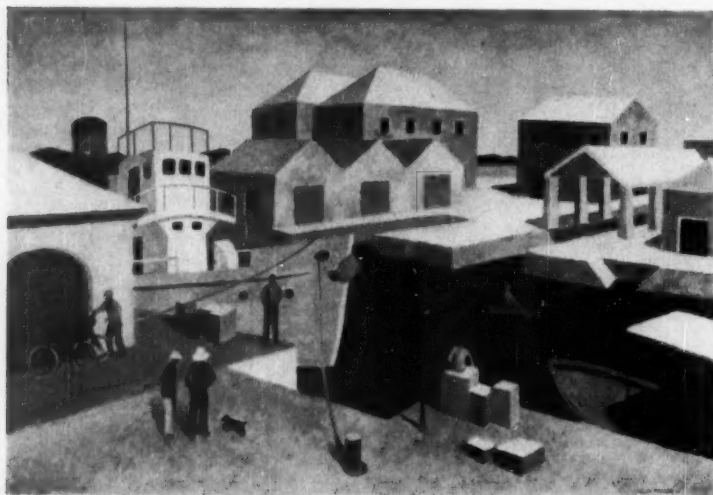
Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *Landscape*,  
1924, oil, 20 x 30",  
Whitney Museum  
of American Art

In 1920 Kuniyoshi came to the gallery, and up to the time it closed held some ten exhibitions there. From 1923 to 1932, Niles Spencer was with the gallery, although as already noted he held but two exhibitions in those years. From 1920 to 1925, while Stieglitz's gallery was for the most part inactive, Daniel showed Marin every year. He especially liked to exhibit as a group Demuth watercolors, Dickinson pastels, Kuniyoshi india-ink drawings and Sheeler drawings in colored pencil. Among others whom Daniel also showed during this period were Karl Knaths, Paul Burlin, Jules Pascin, Leon Kroll, Henry Billings, Louis Bouché, Alexander Brook, Raphael Soyer and Saul Schary.

The "baby" of the gallery was Peter Blume, who went to see Daniel in the fall of 1925, aged nineteen, carrying a portfolio of his work which he left behind for consideration. He

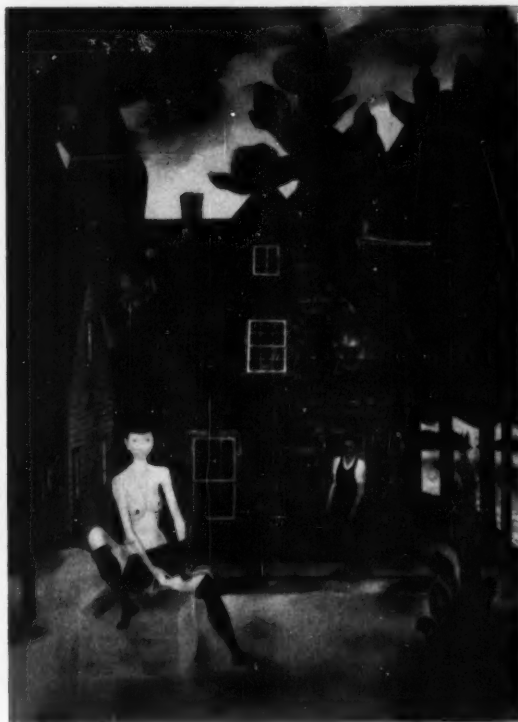
had tried without success to interest Carl Zigrosser at Weyhe's. At any rate, the young artist was enabled to go on drawing and painting. His first and only one-man show at the Daniel Gallery was in 1930, after Alfred H. Barr, Jr., had persuaded the late Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to acquire (and in 1935 to give to the Museum of Modern Art) both the finished version of Blume's *Parade* and a vertical study for that picture. The first Blume painting that Daniel sold was to Ferdinand Howald—a still-life of cyclamens, painted in 1925. This picture precedes the rather satirical works that Blume was to complete during the following two years, but also foretells the more abstract compositions, inspired by Ozenfant's and Le Corbusier's purism, which were to follow presently.

The Daniel Gallery's most important patron throughout most of its existence was Ferdi-



Niles Spencer,  
*Ordinance Island, Bermuda*,  
1928, oil, 24 x 36",  
Museum of Modern Art,  
gift of Sam A. Lewisohn

*Peter Blume, Maine Coast,  
1926, oil, 39 x 29",  
collection  
Mr. & Mrs. R. Sturgis Ingersoll,  
Philadelphia*



nand Howald, as has already been stated. Howald was a bachelor who had made money in West Virginia coal mines, retired from business in 1908 at the age of fifty, invested his funds in common stocks, which appreciated greatly in value, and devoted his means to collecting. Howald bought from the Daniel Gallery consistently from 1914 to the end of the 1920's. He and Daniel became good friends, visiting exhibitions together and discussing art in the Park Avenue apartment which Howald used when he came to New York from his home in Columbus. He bought *Marins* every year, and Daniel would assemble at his gallery a group of the artist's latest work to show to Howald. On one occasion Howald bought three *Marins* for \$3,300. If it had not been for this patron, Daniel ruminates, *Marin* would have had a hard time in the 'twenties. Before his gallery closed, Daniel had sold over thirty *Marins* to Ferdinand Howald, as well as almost equal numbers of paintings by Demuth, Dickinson and Hartley, in addition to many other contemporary American artists. This was substantial patronage indeed! Howald's collection, which at the time of his death numbered almost three hundred works by American artists, is now in the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts.

Daniel made many sales to other important collectors: Duncan Phillips, Sam A. Lewi-  
sohn, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., John T.

Spaulding, Miss Lizzie P. Bliss, John O'Hara Cosgrave, Philip Goodwin, Morton R. Goldsmith, F. H. Hirschland, Mrs. Meredith Hare, Charles B. Hoyt, Sturgis Ingersoll, Wolfgang S. Schwabacher, A. Mackay Smith, Arthur J. Eddy and Albert C. Barnes. But never to John Quinn, Daniel adds.

In the illusory 'twenties, it must have seemed that prosperity would be unending. When sales were good, nothing more delighted "Pop" Daniel (as the artists called him) than to take a large party of painters and their wives to dinner at a French restaurant in the Forties, where the sales could be celebrated in proper speakeasy style. With the advent of better times—and the 'twenties were better for artists than the 'teens—the Daniel Gallery moved to a room twenty-three feet square, with a skylight, on the top floor of 600 Madison Avenue—space now occupied by the Kootz Gallery. The 'twenties did not go on forever, however. The Daniel Gallery closed in 1932; a man's career came to an end.

In 1943 the artists he had befriended gave Charles Daniel a testimonial dinner. Three years later, all his paintings were sold at auction. Looking back on his long endeavor, Charles Daniel makes his own comment: "I paid the rent. I paid the light. I paid Hartpence. I grub-staked the artists. How many artists did I help to go to Europe? But I never went myself. . . ."

# RUBENS' PEN DRAWINGS

*Julius S. Held*

EVER since the wordy arguments of the French Academicians of the seventeenth century, Rubens' name has been the war-cry of all those writers and artists who felt that color was the painter's primary concern. Delacroix, Constable and Renoir, as truly "painterly" painters, acknowledged their debt to him in one way or the other. Fromentin, with his great sensibility towards visual experience, paid eloquent homage to the master's color, while passing by his drawings and even his sketches. Jacob Burckhardt called Rubens the "resplendent colorist," even though it is already apparent from the context that the Swiss classicist admired Rubens' art despite, rather than because of, its color. The modern public, having again become extremely color-conscious, finds Rubens once more to its liking, as was demonstrated—surely to the surprise of many—by the outcome of the popularity contest conducted recently during the Diamond Jubilee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, in which the Ringling Museum's *Lot and His Family*, a somewhat loud piece of Rubens' early period, topped the list.

In the face of such a persistent tradition, it might seem rather paradoxical to insist that *drawing* was the backbone of Rubens' art after all. And yet this should be obvious to anyone who frees himself from the popular conceptions and tries to study the works of the master with unprejudiced eyes. Drawing played a basic role in the preparation of Rubens' canvases. His famous color sketches are fundamentally drawings with indications of color. They were first done with a fine brush that drew the outline and gave some shading, and these lines are still visible in most of them. Indeed, the coloristic effect of Rubens' oil sketches is generally rather reserved. The full splendor of his palette is found only in the large paintings, but even they retain the structural clarity of an art based on drawing. The ease and success with which they were transferred under Rubens' own guidance into the black-and-white medium of engraving is largely due to this fact.

The importance of draftsmanship in Rubens' art is naturally best illustrated by the drawings of the master themselves. Yet it is surprising to find that this part of his activity is relatively little known, and that even the better informed are more familiar with works done in one medium than in another. Rubens used the pen, or pen and wash, about as much as black and red chalk, although he seems to have used the pen more frequently in his early



Fig. 1. Study for Portrait of Brigida Spinola-Doria, c. 1606, pen and ink with wash, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", private collection, London

periods than later. At any rate, it is the chalk drawings, often on tinted paper, that most people are apt to remember. These drawings, with their broad strokes, softly modeled surfaces and richly modulated effects, often heightened by white, agree more fully with the popular picture of Rubens' art as a primarily coloristic one than do the more sharply outlined pen drawings. The pen drawings also are generally more modest in scale, contrary to the equally widespread notion of Rubens as an artist devoted to huge formats.

Just because these pen drawings were formerly overlooked, or even attributed to other masters, it has been in this field that the most important discoveries have been made in recent years. Rubens' stature as a draftsman has grown greatly since it has become evident how easily he "penned down," literally speaking, his first thoughts, and how eloquently a few sketchy lines by him could express passionate or tender feeling. In addition, even within this group of pen draw-



ings there is great variety, ranging from a quick first draft of a composition to a careful study of a costume from life, done with old Breughel's eye for the characteristic detail; from a copy of an ancient bust, executed with the methodical linework intended as a guide to the engraver, to a study for a detail in a painting, in which the vigorous application of wash added to the pen strokes creates a striking luminary effect.

Hardly a year goes by without the discovery of one or more of these drawings. Such a recent find, made by Ludwig Baldass, is the lovely sketch for one of Rubens' early Genoese portraits—a category of pictures which has only been identified for about twenty-five years (Fig. 1). It shows a lady in a stunning silk costume, standing full length on the terrace of a palace facing the garden. The portrait for which this drawing was done is still preserved, though only fragmentarily: it is that of the charming and youthful Brigida Spinola-Doria, a prominent member of the Genoese aristocracy. Curiously enough, in the drawing her features differ considerably from those in the painting. She appears not only older but also of a different physiognomic cast. Yet costume and setting are so similar that there can be no doubt about the connection between the two works. The explanation for this discrepancy does not lie in a process of idealization intervening between drawing and painting. It is due to the peculiar relationship between the artists of the seventeenth century and their models, if the latter belonged to the highest social circles. In such cases, the persons to be portrayed sat as models only for their faces; for the rest, the artist had to content himself with "stand-ins." When Rubens prepared the equestrian portrait of the Duke of Lerma, for instance, he used an equerry of the Duke in the preparatory drawings. In Brigida's case, too, one of her

ladies-in-waiting probably posed for Rubens, while her mistress gave him only enough of her time to do her features.

A particularly interesting group of Rubens' pen drawings is preserved in the British Museum. They once were part of an album in which the artist copied heads, figures and even whole scenes which he considered interesting and potentially useful. The only writers who so far have devoted a book to Rubens' drawings, G. Glück and F. M. Haberditzl, omitted this group, presumably as not authentic, despite the fact that the many notes appearing on the drawings were clearly written by Rubens himself. Actually, Rubens not only did the London group but most likely many more drawings of the kind. One such drawing (Fig. 2) has previously been called "Flemish, fifteenth century," and there is no doubt that the costumes are reminiscent of fashions worn in the latter part of that century. The chaste limpidity of the pure line drawing, too, is close to the style of fifteenth-century draftsmen and is unexpected from the hand of a master who more than anyone else is associated with baroque bravado. Yet Rubens betrays himself in the looseness and the spontaneous freedom with which curls are drawn or shadows indicated. A slight pressure of the pen, discernible chiefly around eyes, nose and mouth and suggestive of light and shade, is almost as sure an indication as the handwriting itself, with its fluid and yet unpretentious rhythms. Indeed, Rubens' handwriting is graphologically beautiful and expressive, worthy of a man who was respected for his intellect, his scholarship and his diplomatic skill as much as for his artistic activity. The London sketchbook contains other drawings of this kind, representing counts and countesses of Flanders, mostly in late medieval costumes. The majority of these sketches, as I

Fig. 2. Carolus and Gerberga, from a sketchbook, pen and ink, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2", New York, Wildenstein and Co.





Fig. 3. (left)  
Antoine de Succa,  
Maria of Cleves (?),  
pen and ink,  
Brussels,  
Bibliothèque Royale



Fig. 4. (right)  
Rubens,  
Maria of Cleves (?),  
pen and ink,  
from a sketchbook,  
London,  
British Museum

will demonstrate in another study, were not copied by Rubens from the original monuments, whatever they may have been, but from an album, fortunately still preserved, which had been assembled only a few years earlier. Its author, Antoine de Succa, had traveled about the Netherlands, apparently under orders from the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, to make a record of tombstones, tapestries, paintings and the like which contained iconographic material of the dynastic history of the country. It was an interesting enterprise, one of the first "archeological" excursions we know of, and it is regrettable that the work has come down to us only as a fragment. Rubens' curiosity was clearly attracted by the work, which was surely accessible to him in his capacity as court painter. The London sketchbook bears witness to his interest. Yet, in comparing the drawings by De Succa with Rubens' "copies" (Figs. 3 and 4) we see also how the timid meticulousness with which the archeologist had drawn the ancient monuments was translated, without any arbitrary changes or major omissions, into the lucid, controlled and forceful linework of Rubens' own style.

While such copies after other masters have their importance for our knowledge of Rubens' sources of influence and the range of his

interests, we naturally find more rewarding those drawings in which he reveals to us his working processes and allows us to watch his own creative activity. Some of them contain records of compositions either lost or never executed. There are, for instance, in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire two beautiful early drawings with sketches for a *Last Supper*. One of them (Fig. 6) has never been reproduced, though both have been discussed by L. Burchard with his usual thoroughness in his catalogue of the Rubens exhibition held at Wildenstein's in London from October to November, 1950. The composition contemplated by Rubens was surely inspired, in a general way, by Leonardo's painting of the subject; yet we can clearly see how Rubens tried to contract the broad frieze of the renaissance design by denser accumulations of figures, how he substituted for the calm Christ in Leonardo's painting a figure with a sweeping rhetorical gesture, and how he gave to the movements and expressions of his apostles an almost violent urgency that contrasts strongly with the balanced characterization of the same figures in the earlier work. A young apostle seated at the left and in front of the table is actually a "quotation" from the celebrated *Calling of Matthew* by Caravaggio, providing one more instance of Rubens'



Fig. 5. Unidentified subject, 1604-08, pen and ink, Metropolitan Museum of Art

familiarity with, and admiration for, the paintings of that great revolutionary in Italian art.

From the same period as the drawings for the *Last Supper* dates a little-known, unpublished drawing in the Metropolitan Museum, hitherto attributed to Van Dyck (Fig. 5). The subject, evidently from ancient history or legend, is still unexplained. A youthful soldier in short tunic and sword, wearing a wreath on his head and carrying two others in his hands, comes run-

ning from the left and is greeted with what appears to be astonishment tinged with sadness by men of different ages seated around a table. Two other heads at the upper left and some vague lines below complete the drawing, which is done in such delicate strokes that the photo shows the design more clearly than does the original. Like the drawing of the *Last Supper* this, too, reveals Rubens' desire to combine expansive gestures and highly emotional expressions

Fig. 6. Studies for a *Last Supper*, 1604-08, pen and ink,  $11\frac{1}{8} \times 17\frac{1}{2}$ ", collection of the Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth





Fig. 7. Judith Killing Holofernes, c. 1608, pen and ink with wash, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt

with figures of healthily athletic forms and "classical" facial types.

Van Dyck's drawings with their exaggerated elongations of all the extremities are actually very different from those of Rubens, but this is not the only case in which pen drawings of the master have been considered to be the work of his pupil. A dramatic *Judith Killing Holofernes* in Frankfurt (Fig. 7) is still catalogued as a Van Dyck although it, too, is a typical early drawing by Rubens. It is probably connected with a composition which for a long time has been known only through an engraving by C. Galle—perhaps the first engraving ever to be made from a painting by the master. The drawing, somewhat more fluent in design than the engraved version, gains added excitement through Rubens' use of wash. Holofernes' twisted and helpless body is dragged from the protective darkness of his tent into the brutal light, the same light which helps Judith's sword—itsself still in shadow—to find its mark. The maid, in a movement opposed to that of Judith, seems to try to draw away from the strong light, anticipating, as it were, the escape of both women under cover of night. Holofernes' pose, especially that of his outstretched arms, is repeated in other early works of the master, among them a painting of *Cain and Abel*, the long-lost original of which, rediscovered two years ago by the author, has not yet been published. This pose is finally echoed in the figure of Samson in Rembrandt's

*Blinding of Samson* of 1636—the picture which marks the highwater-mark of the "Rubensian" phase in Rembrandt's development.

The mention of Rembrandt's name in this connection is no accident. Indeed, it seems almost inevitable that a consideration of Rubens' pen drawings should lead, in the end, to a comparison with those of the Dutch master. The vast majority of Rembrandt's drawings were done in this medium, and they form a magnificent *oeuvre*, of which a good impression can be gained from the selection published not long ago by the Phaidon Press. It is evident at once that the function of Rembrandt's drawings in most cases is very different from that of Rubens'. For Rubens, drawing always remains a preparatory maneuver, subservient to the execution of his paintings. Even when he copied from other masters, he did so in order to have useful material for his larger works. In his will, Rubens requested that the bulk of his drawings be kept for the benefit of any of his children or sons-in-law who might become a painter; only if there were none—as turned out to be the case—should they be dispersed. For Rembrandt, on the other hand, drawing was a quick means of giving visible form to the many ideas and moods that filled his mind. In this respect Rembrandt was more "modern" than Rubens; he needed a medium which made it easy for him to "express" himself—to project his feelings of power or pathos, of inspiration or depression. Drawing for Rembrandt was a *central* activity, one that more than any other gives a clue to the innermost thoughts of the master. With Rubens, on the contrary, drawing was—as I have pointed out—a *basic* activity, in the sense that all his work was built upon it; but by the same token it is also a subordinate activity, just as it had been for the painters of the renaissance—even for Leonardo. Characteristically, the completed narrative, which forms such a large group in Rembrandt's drawn work, is rarely found with Rubens. Compositional sketches, like his powerful *Crucifixion* (Fig. 8) or his *Conversion of St. Paul* (Fig. 9) are clearly working drawings, showing many changes and having a frankly fragmentary character. The magnificent study of *Two Shepherds* (Fig. 10) for an early *Adoration* contains a head which is not found in the painting and which may have been planned for a different context altogether. Yet it is sheets like these that make it clear that Rubens' pen drawings need not fear any comparison. The bold lighting of the *Shepherds*, derived most likely from Venetian rather than from Caravaggiesque sources, makes the small drawing a memorable experience. The *Crucifixion*, on the other hand, gains its effect by the very fury and speed with which its lines seem to be drawn. (Bellori, speaking of Rubens' brushwork, used the term *furia del pennello*.) They appear to rush across the surface in an





Fig. 8. *Crucifixion*, c. 1620, pen and ink,  $8\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ ", Boymans Museum, Rotterdam

almost breathless desire to keep up with the flow of the artist's creative imagination.

The *Conversion of St. Paul*, of which only the left half is reproduced here, perhaps comes

Fig. 9. *Conversion of St. Paul*, c. 1613-14, pen and ink with wash,  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ ", Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



closer than any other drawing to Rubens' grandiose symphonic paintings of battles, hunts or *Last Judgments*. Specifically, it seems to contain in a rudimentary way the seeds of ideas which found their full development in the great *Battle of the Amazons* in Munich. Everything is done in the most sketchy manner, and yet the rushing, frightened people and the excited animals are projected with a supreme mastery, as economical in its means as it is sure of its effects. We see, moreover, that Rubens visualized the whole scene with all its complexity; we see also how effortlessly he utilized a Michelangelesque idea (from the Joram lunette) and how judiciously he created intervals between groups, and applied light and shade, in order to avoid confusion and to create space.

It is exactly pieces like the *Crucifixion* and the *Conversion of Paul* which lead us back once more to Rembrandt's drawings, especially to some of his early period. There, too, do we find the rapid, rushing lines, the bold shorthand notations of heads and limbs, the free use of corrections irrespective of final effect. Rubens may articulate his figures more clearly, both in their actions and in their shapes. Yet some of the graphic conventions, some of the patterns of abbreviation are sufficiently similar to warrant the question whether we have here only a coincidence or the result of actual acquaintance. To answer this it would be necessary, among other things, to consider the few preserved pen drawings by Brouwer and to weigh the possibility of Brouwer's role as an intermediary between the two masters. Suffice to say that it is by no means unlikely that the pen drawings by the unquestioned leader of the Flemish school played a—perhaps major—role in the formation of the early drawing style of the greatest Dutch artist.

Fig. 10. *Two Shepherds, Study for Adoration of the Shepherds in Fermo*, c. 1606, pen and ink with wash,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 6$ ", Fodor-museum, Amsterdam



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## Contributors

The article by **FREDERICK S. WIGHT** was developed from a paper read at the annual meeting of the College Art Association of America in Washington last January. Mr. Wight, associate director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, has recently returned from a trip to Mexico in connection with a large show of Orozco's work to be presented at the Institute next year.

**CARLO CARRA**, only veteran of the two principal *avant-garde* movements in Italian art, was one of the five original futurist artists (1910) and from 1917-21 was a member of De Chirico's *scuola metafisica*. In 1915 he decided on a return to the masters of the early renaissance; his interest in their work has been reflected not only in his own painting but in his many books and articles, including a standard monograph on Giotto. The present article was translated for *MAGAZINE OF ART* by Frances Frenaye.

The results of **FATHER COUTURIER's** efforts at Assy, Vence and Audincourt to bring the foremost modern artists into the service of the Catholic Church have attracted international attention. The editors are grateful to Mrs. Eloise Spaeth for her assistance in obtaining this article.

The article by **MATTHEW NOWICKI** was originally given as a speech on April 5th, 1950 before the American Institute of Decorators in New York. It was published in an issue of the student publication of the North Carolina State College School of Design, of which he was a faculty member. Mr. Nowicki had already won exceptional renown at the age of thirty-eight before his tragic death in an airplane accident while returning from India in September, 1950.

The recent publications of **ELIZABETH MC CAUSLAND** include *American Processional*, published in connection with the Sesquicentennial Exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery last year, and *A. H. Maurer*. She has recently completed a catalogue of the collection of Marsden Hartleys belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Hudson D. Walker, now on long-term loan to the University of Minnesota.

**JULIUS S. HELD**, associate professor of art at Barnard College, is now preparing a book on Rubens' drawings. This, like his present article, is the outgrowth of a trip to Europe two years ago to study Flemish seventeenth-century painting, as a Special Advanced Fellow of the Belgian American Educational Foundation.

## Forthcoming

The December issue will include: **ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN**, "Music and Painting"; two papers by **HERBERT BAYER** and **CHARLES EAMES** presented at the Aspen Design Conference; **RICHARD LIPPOLD**, "Sculpture?"; **HENRY S. CHURCHILL**, "New York Rezoned"; and **WILLIAM LIEBERMAN**, "Illustrations by Matisse."

## Film Review

***Sculpture in Minnesota***, directed by Paul M. Laporte, produced by Macalester Film Studio. Music by Vincent Carpenter. 16 mm; black and white; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from Audio-Visual Department, Macalester College, St. Paul 5, Minn. Rental \$6.50; sale \$60.

There are so many presentable sculptors in Minnesota, and their work has called up so many visual ideas in the director, Dr. Paul M. Laporte, that he could not help accommodating within the ten minutes of film space available to him a large variety of materials and approaches at the expense of continuity and leisurely completeness. The result is a lively film sketchbook, filled with stimulating glimpses at the technical, esthetic and architectural aspects of sculptural work.

The interaction of artist, tool and medium is strikingly demonstrated when, in the opening sequence, sensitive hands guide the chisel over the harsh surface of stone, knead the doughy clay, or drill a Moore-ish hole while carefully following the organic streamlines of wood. In the second section, Dr. Laporte displays the modulations of shape and texture by an imaginative use of light and motion. He renounces the dissecting close-ups and black shadows, which violate the integrity of sculpture in a cheaply dramatic way. Simple rotations draw visual action from the static block, and the movement of motor-driven mobiles is enriched by well-chosen camera angles. The impressionist technique of the film is least successful when a hurried sight-seeing trip presents sculpture *in situ* by catching vistas of gardens and interiors without clearly defining architectural space or conveying the mood of church and landscape.

Taken as a whole, the film—without the use of words—concentrates a surprising amount of substance in a single reel and proves again how much can be achieved with small means.

RUDOLF ARNHEIM  
Sarah Lawrence College

## Recent Art Film Releases

***By Design***, produced by The Australian National Film Board, directed by Geoffrey Collings. The work of Australian industrial designers. 16 mm; black and white; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from The Australian News and Information Bureau, 636 Fifth Avenue, New York. Rental \$1.50; sale \$30.

***Jackson Pollock***, produced by Paul Falkenberg and Hans Namuth, narrated by Jackson Pollock. Music by Morton Feldman. 16 mm; color; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 18. Rental \$7.50; sale \$100.

***Let's Talk About the Nose***, by Rodolfo Sonego, produced by Geo Taparelli, directed by Clauco Pellegrini; art director, Michele Guerrisi. Music by Carlo Innocenzi. The nose as seen by artists of many lands and periods. 35 mm; black and white; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from Lux Film Distributing Corporation, 1501 Broadway, New York 18. Apply for rates.

***Object Lesson***, by Christopher Young. Winner of the Grand Prix at the 1950 International Film Festival, Venice, as the best *avant-garde* film. 16 mm; black and white; color; sound; 1 reel (12 min.). Available from Cinema 16, 59 Park Avenue, New York 16. Rental \$9.

***Rhapsody-Motion Painting III***, by Robert Bruce Rogers. A motion composition integrated to Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6. 16 mm; color; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 18. Rental \$6; sale \$75.

***Room Studies Nos. 1-3***, by Soren Melson. Three abstract films by Denmark's foremost experimental film maker. 16 mm; black and white; sound; 1 reel (7 min.). Available from Cinema 16, 59 Park Avenue, New York 16. Rental \$7.

***Taliesin East***, produced and photographed by Jim Davis. 16 mm; color; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 18. Rental \$7.50; sale \$100.

***Taliesin West***, produced by Jim Davis, photographed by Jim Davis and Wynant D. Vanderpool, Jr., narration by Frank Lloyd Wright spoken by Ernest T. Dewald. Music by Beethoven played by the String Quartet of the Princeton Society of Amateurs. 16 mm; color; sound; 1 reel (10 min.). Available from A.F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 18. Rental \$7.50; sale \$100.

***The Tear*** and three other abstract Danish films, by Henning Bendtsen and Soren Melson. 16 mm; black and white; sound; 1 reel (9 min.). Available from Cinema 16, 59 Park Avenue, New York 16. Rental \$8.

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### NOTICE

The Hyperion Press in Paris has learned of a serious error which appears on page 64 of their publication *French Painting at the Time of the Impressionists* by Raymond Cogniat. The caption-head at present reads:

PAUL CEZANNE, Portrait of Mme Cézanne.  
 New York. Walter P. Chrysler, Jr. Collection.

The Hyperion Press has been informed that this portrait was at no time in the collection of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., but had been from 1922 to 1944 in the collection of Lizzie P. Bliss—Museum of Modern Art, New York, and from 1944 to date in the collection of Louis E. Stern, New York, and therefore the caption-head should read:

PAUL CEZANNE, Portrait of Mme Cézanne.  
 New York. Louis E. Stern Collection.

The Hyperion Press regrets this error and will correct this caption-head in all further printings of its publications as indicated above.

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## Book Reviews

John Pope-Hennessy, *The Complete Work of Paolo Uccello*, New York, Oxford (Phaidon), 1950. 173 pp., 175 illus. incl. folding and color plates. \$6.50.

The artist whom Vasari described as a man "solitary, strange, melancholy and poor," obsessed by a passion for perspective, has too long been known chiefly to historians and to certain painters who saw in his fondness for abstract, stereometric forms an anticipation of tendencies prominent in modern art. Pope-Hennessy's is the first monograph on Uccello to appear in English. Addressed, as are most Phaidon books, to the general reader, this volume seems destined to win for Uccello the wider public he deserves. It contains excellent reproductions of all the works of the Florentine master, including many revealing details, and of a generous number of pictures which have at one time or another been ascribed to him. Illustrations of related works by Uccello's contemporaries complete the visual documentation.

The introduction presents a lucid account of all that is known about Uccello and defines his historical position with clarity and circumspection. But the author's comments upon the works, although highly readable, are less satisfactory. The esthetic significance of Uccello's most compelling achievement, the *Rout of San Romano*, escapes him. The horses in the *Rout*, he says, echoing Berenson and others, seem inanimate and motionless—as, indeed, they do. But why? It may well be that the late John Peale Bishop came nearest to the heart of the matter when he called one of the three battles the spatial imitation of a moment: Uccello has set the actions of time before us as a complex of space, and movement had to be suspended to bring about that transformation.

The crucial problem of Uccello's paradoxical development, with its abrupt and perplexing changes of style from the *Deluge* to the *Rout*—seemingly a retrogression—and from the *Rout* to the late predella and *Hunt*—seemingly a return to the gothic—receives somewhat perfunctory treatment. So does another major problem: that created by the conflict between a poetic imagination and the impulse to apply scientific principles. To maintain that there were two Uccellos, a naturalist and a decorator, does not solve the problem.

There is no bibliography, but the views of earlier critics are quoted in the catalogue. (Reference should have been made to Robert Oertel's observations on the drawing for the *John Hawkwood*.) In the vexing question of attributions Pope-Hennessy is conservative, yet generally convincing. He separates the wheat from the chaff more judiciously than previous authorities, thus providing a sound foundation for further study.

GÜNTHER NEUFELD  
 Cambridge, Mass.

MAGAZINE OF ART



Walter W. S. Cook and José Gudiol Ricart, *Pintura e Imageria Románicas (Ars Hispaniae, Vol. VI)*, Madrid, Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1950. 404 pp., 444 illus. 300 pesetas.

The authors of this highly useful book (dedicated to Archer M. Huntington) deplore in their introduction the absence of a general corpus of medieval painting—a lament in which all medievalists would join—but they have succeeded by dint of more than four hundred illustrations and careful classification (together with a select bibliography and three good indices) in giving us a consistent picture of romanesque pictorial style in Spain, in the larger part of their book which is devoted to frescoes and panel painting. And this despite an obvious disinclination from any but the most reasonable judgments and attributions, and also in the face of an extraordinary lack of documentation. Only three signatures of painters are known, and the few documents collected by Gudiol Cunill in *La pintura mitg-aval catalana (I, Els Primitius)* cannot be linked to existing works.

The outlines of this picture are drawn briefly in the introduction to the volume. Spanish painting detached itself from its archaic phase of the eleventh century, represented by the primitive frescoes of the churches of Tarrasa, S. Quirce de Pedret, and S. Cecilia de Granera—works devoid of monumental composition, and mere translations of miniatures to walls—under two foreign influences, to both of which our authors add the term "Byzantine," although to this reviewer the adjective seems to carry more weight in this connection than it deserves. The first of these foreign influences was the "Italo-Byzantine," carried into Spain through the Pyrenees and probably, our authors believe, by actual Italian artists imported by Bishop San Román de Roda who in 1123 consecrated the churches of S. Clemente and S. Maria in Tahull (Lérida) where the first and finest works of this school were executed. A branch of it was active later in Castile at S. Baudel de Berlanga (Soria) and Maderuelo (Segovia). Another current of "Byzantine" style, spread by the "Master of Pedret," left its traces from the valley of Arán to the region of Berga. A fourth helped to establish the style at Seo de Urgel, where it had much to do with the beginning of panel painting.

The second "Byzantine" influx crossed the Pyrenees from France and probably from Poitou. Less hieratic than the Italian, given more to narrative and touches of realism, it extended itself into Roussillon, and in Catalonia into the regions of Gerona, Vich and the Vallés, lending its influence also to panel-painting. Its modest importation of "French-Byzantine" style was outdistanced by the author of the remarkable frescoes of the Panteón de los Reyes at S. Isidoro de León, who in the middle of the twelfth century brought in a more authentic version of French romanesque.

The thirteenth century saw a fresh advent of Italian "Byzantine" in the school of Ripoll,

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manifest in both panel paintings and frescoes. With this the romanesque proper ends in Catalonia, superseded by the new gothic manner in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, whose protagonist was the panel painter, the "Master of Suriguerola." In Aragon the new "Byzantine" romanesque was practiced in purer form by an artist, probably himself an Italian, who executed the paintings of the chapter-house of Sigena, and whose influence is found in panels and frescoes down to 1300 and the end of the romanesque in Aragon. It did not extend to Huesca, however, where panel painting developed a more conservative and more Spanish manner until it fell under the influence of the "Master of S. Miguel de Foces," who brought in the French gothic here as did the "Master of Suriguerola" in Catalonia. The romanesque of Castile and León, save for the "Italo-Byzantine" intrusions of S. Baudel de Berlanga and Maderuelo and the French painting at the Panteón de los Reyes, is frankly considered by our authors to be a problem for future study. Antón Sánchez de Segovia, purveyor of a fine French gothic manner, who signed the frescoes of the chapel of S. Martín in the old cathedral of Salamanca, probably in 1262, had no predecessors or compeers in Aragon, and no connection with the imported art of Berlanga and Maderuelo, or the Panteón de los Reyes. He terminates the romanesque in the west as did the "Master of Suriguerola" in Catalonia and the "Master of S. Miguel de Foces" in Aragon.

Throughout the descriptions of painting the reader will be impressed by the careful analysis of technique and color, and especially with reference to the ingenious devices wherewith the artists circumvented the difficulties of *buon fresco*, or managed to insert in their works the appearance of metalwork or jewels. One could wish that a similar interest could have extended to iconography. For some features of romanesque iconography in Spain are of especial significance, as for example the persistence of early Christian motives such as the colobium in the *Crucifixion* (early frescoes of S. Quirce de Pedret; the carved Crucifixes of Catalonia and Roussillon), the maid-servant in the *Annunciation* at S. Pedro de Sorpe, the addition of the Magi to the *Virgin in Majesty* (S. Juan de Tredós), or their reduction to one at Maderuelo. The absence of the  $\times$  cross in the *Martyrdom of St. Andrew*, appearing elsewhere in the thirteenth century, might have been of use in determining the date of the altar of Sagars and the frontal of S. Andrés de Valltarga. The bearded John Evangelist of S. Fructuoso de Bierge is noted as unique, but the curious introduction of the sons of the patriarchs in the *Ancestry of Christ* of the chapter-house of Sigena deserves more treatment than is given it. One is less impressed by the "Byzantine" form of the *Baptism* in S. Eulalia de Estahón than by the more authentic Byzantine motive (not noted) of the

piping shepherd in the *Annunciation to the Shepherds* at the Panteón de los Reyes. In this cycle, too, one would have liked more discussion of the beast-headed Evangelists of the vault and their relation to other instances of this singular type. A curious late survival deserving some comment is the pinwheel ornament of the paintings on the tomb of Ximeno de Foces in the church of S. Miguel de Foces (Huesca), of the end of the thirteenth century.

No such criticism can be suggested by the stylistic analysis, most evident in the tracing of the foreign influences on twelfth- and thirteenth-century Spanish painting. Italian influence or the actual importation of Italian artists is pointed out not only with reference to the masters of Tahull and the author of the paintings of the chapter-house of Sigena, but also as regards the painters who did the frontals of S. Andrés de Valltarga and Orellá in Roussillon, the thirteenth-century authors of the altar of Llussá and the Passion altarpiece from S. Clara de Palma (Majorca), and the painter of S. Pedro de Arlanza whom our authors have identified with the artist of Sigena.

This last attribution is one of the numerous new contributions to the historical criticism of Spanish romanesque which the book contains. Another is the assignment to a French journeyman of the frescoes of the Panteón de los Reyes, counter to the opinion of Chandler Post who held them of Spanish authorship. Our authors also find the east Catalan "Master of Osormort" (frescoes of S. Saturnino de Osormort; S. Martín de Brull; S. Juan de Belcaire) so close to S. Savin as to indicate training in France. Further French influence, aside from the general adoption of French gothic formulae at the end of the thirteenth century, is noted in the panel painting of Navarre of that century, and in the chapter on liturgical sculpture which terminates the book, with reference to the ivory plaques of Leningrad and the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

Apropos of these plaques and other ivories, it seems to this reviewer that more might have been said of their relation to the Spanish-Toulouse school of sculpture—the most interesting phase of European romanesque—and one misses in this category the important Leonese silver reliefs of the reliquary of St. Adrian in the Art Institute of Chicago. As for the above-mentioned divergence from Professor Post, it should not stand as indicating the attitude of the authors towards this distinguished scholar, whose authority is acknowledged throughout the book: in his dating of S. Maria de Mur, his identification of S. Iñigo in the apse of S. Eulalia de Estahón (whose canonization in 1165 is a precious indication of date), his isolation of the "Master of the Llussanés," his priority in the study of the paintings of Sigena, his notice of the relation of the Arca of S. Isidro (Episcopal Palace, Madrid) to the miniatures of the *Cantigas* of Alfonso the Wise, etc. etc.

The ivory plaque of the Metropolitan, mentioned above, is but one of a long series of examples of Spanish romanesque that have emigrated to the United States. The list is surprisingly extensive: the Walters Collection in Baltimore possesses a frontal from the atelier of the "Master of the Llusanés" with the story of St. Martin (c. 1250); the Boston Museum has the magnificent main apse of S. Maria de Mur, the only work known of this remarkable painter, the lateral apses having lost their decoration in a fire of 1936 (references to fires in this year of the Civil War are frequent throughout the book). The Metropolitan contains, besides the ivory already mentioned, a stucco altar-frontal from Ginestare de Cardós (which can be dated by its twin in the Barcelona Museum of 1251), and in the Cloisters a portion of a retable from Añastro as well as the fine Crucifix from S. Clara, Palencia ("unique for Spain; thoroughly French"). At Providence is another Crucifix on which our authors write that "few sculptures of the twelfth century can rival it for beauty and sensibility." The twelfth-century altar-frontal from Martinet at Worcester is an interesting example of the panel painting of Urgel. Dumbarton Oaks in Washington has the *Christ in Majesty* from among the ivories of the Arca of S. Millán. Numerous other pieces have found their way into American private collections: three figures of saints from the apsidal frescoes of S. Román dels Bons (Andorra); hunting and Biblical scenes from the frescoes of S. Baudel de Berlanga (Dereppe Collection); parts of a lovely gothic Passion retable (Wildenstein and Dean Collections); a figure of Christ from a sculptured *Descent from the Cross* (Gardner Collection).

We are told that "the chronology of the romanesque frescoes of Catalonia cannot count on a single indisputable datum." Pijoan is not followed in identifying the female donor labeled COMITISA in the apse of S. Pedro de Bungal with Guillerma, wife of the Count of Pallars who made a donation to the church in 1196, since this date seems too late for the style. On the other hand some evidence is afforded by the consecration date, 1167, of S. Román dels Bons, decorated by a follower of the "Master of Urgel." Outside of Catalonia chronology is hardly more documented. The frescoes of the Panteón de los Reyes contain the donor-figures of Ferdinand II and a queen of whose label the letters CA are left. But she may be Urraca of Portugal, his first wife, or his third of the same name, leaving the dating doubtful between 1164-1175 and 1181-1188. The mural retable of the chapel of S. Martín adjoining the porch of the old cathedral of Salamanca is signed by Antón Sánchez with the date ERA DE MIL ECC; our authors agree with Gomez-Moreno in ignoring ERA and dating 1300. In Huesca, the gothic altar of Puebla de Castro bears the date 1303. In the category of *Imaginería* we are better served by the inscriptions: the stucco frontal of Ginestare de

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Cardós, twin of the one in the Metropolitan, is dated 1251, and the surprising date in the eleventh century of the principal romanesque ivories is clearly authenticated by the royal donors of their key-pieces. A valuable criterion for dating in this category of liturgical sculpture is the reliquary-diptych of Bishop Menéndez (1162-1175) in the Cámara Santa of Oviedo, cited by Rorimer, e.g., to date the Crucifix of the Cloisters. Further chronological data are furnished by the sculptured tombs of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; among these of special importance is the tomb of S. Ramón de Roda, altar of the crypt of the cathedral of Roda de Isábena, and datable from the translation of his body in 1170.

A *terminus post quem* is afforded in some cases by canonization. St. Bernard, canonized in 1174, appears in the frescoes of S. Román at Toledo, and St. Francis, canonized in 1228, on the Passion altarpiece from S. Clara de Palma (Majorca). The extraordinary speed with which the cult of St. Thomas of Canterbury developed (murdered in 1170, canonized in 1173) makes him a more precise indication of date. An altar in the cathedral of Barcelona was dedicated to him in 1196, but even in 1174 he had one in the cathedral of Toledo. His martyrdom is the favorite subject of the painter who, in the opinion of our authors, was responsible both for the frontal of Espineltas in the Museum of Vich and the frescoes of the apse of Tarrasa, and probably did both soon after the death of the saint. Such double activity in both murals and panel painting was not too rare; the *bottega* of the "Master of the Llusanés" was primarily a factory for the production of altars and frontals, but also produced the painted decoration of one of the apses of the transept of the cathedral of Seo de Urgel and of a tomb in the church of S. Pablo de Casserras.

A feature of the chapter on *Imagineria* which is new (at least to this reviewer) and of exceeding interest, is the account given of the wood-sculpture school of Ribagorza, brought to light by a mission of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in 1903. This expedition unearthed in the church of Erill a literal heap of sculpture which includes the striking *Descent from the Cross* now divided between the Museum of Vich and the Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona. The school flourished from the second quarter of the twelfth century to 1200, and is thoroughly Spanish, even in accents borrowed from Islamic art, and of a style quite apart from the contemporary fresco painters of Tahull, though some of its products were destined for S. Maria de Tahull.

This review may well close with one or two quotations serving to illustrate the superior quality of the criticisms which occasionally interrupt the routine of description in this book, and seem to this reviewer to be unusually thoughtful and valid. Apropos of Catalan frescoes of the thirteenth century: "The painters . . . took no



account of the great error of disdaining the simplicity of eternal symbols, substituting for them the tiresome variety of detailed story: *they confused (italics mine) the mission of the wall, always open to the eye, with that of the illustrated book, to be perused at will.*" On the other hand, with reference to the early gothic painting of Navarre: it "surpasses in expressionism everything that comes later in the painting of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. If this gothic painting could have retained in its maturity the expressive force of these precursors, it is probable that certain artistic concepts presented as innovations of modern art would be counted as achievements of the middle ages."

C. R. MOREY  
Princeton University

**History of Modern Painting: From Picasso to Surrealism, text by Maurice Raynal, Jacques Lassaigue, Werner Schmalenbach, Arnold Rudlinger, Hans Bollinger, translated by Douglas Cooper, New York, Skira, 1950. 210 pp., 212 color plates. \$15.**

The third volume of Skira's *History of Modern Painting* is an account written from the point of view of critics who belong to the same Parisian milieu as the artists. This experience provides Raynal and Lassaigue many fine *aperçus* on character and personal circumstance. It permits Raynal, in particular, to quote the artists and to consult his memories; he is at his best in the sketches of the cubists whom he knew during the heroic period of their art. Lassaigue's pages on Modigliani, Klee and Chagall are excellent.

These intimate characterizations are not enough, however, for a history of modern art, which requires, I believe, a clearer view of the whole, some search into the causes of the new forms and ideas and a more probing observation of the works than these friends of the artists allow themselves. The conception of the book and the nature of the material perhaps stood in the way of writing such a history. The editor had the difficult problem of presenting the year-by-year development of a rapidly changing art during a period shorter than the lifetime of an artist, and of providing at the same time a view of the leading artists as complete personalities.

In spite of the large size of this three-volume history, it contains much less than it promises. The editor's program of studying the art in the "context of the social happenings that accompanied its evolution" is hardly fulfilled. Besides the extensive, valuable bibliographies and

biographies, there are chronological lists of events in the world of art; but their relation to the social context is not at all clear. Whole schools are condensed in one or two pages. In the apportioning of the text among personalities, ideas and works, the first two predominate. The art is too often treated scantily, through well-worn formulas. Raynal is frequently obscure, perhaps because of extreme condensation of his thought or because of an ambition to be more profound than his actual observations warrant. Rich in quotation and allusion, he is also inaccurate and loose. I will cite only a few examples. He mistakenly defines the golden section as the ratio of the side of a square to its diagonal; Luca Giordano's words on *Las Meninas* as the "theology of painting" are misinterpreted to imply a judgment of Velázquez as a "dogmatic" artist; and Schelling's "architecture is frozen music" is attributed to Mme. de Staël. Although Raynal seems to have given up his former fantastic idea that cubism has something to do with Riemannian geometry, he still tells us that cubism "reveals new facts about space and the world"—without venturing to say what these facts are. We also learn from him that Rousseau "invented a completely new form of perspective," but its principles are not even hinted at.

There are some pages on American art, which are illustrated by a Marin. It is flattering—or amusing—to read that the "typically American" qualities in art are: "purity of light, construction in space, grandeur of effect and a sentiment steeped in the romantic feelings natural to the youth of a nation, put across with a vivid, personal touch."

The greatest attraction of the book is its hundred and twelve color plates. To judge them properly as reproductions one must compare them with the originals and consider the technical problems of photography, engraving and printing faced by the publisher. They have been criticized in principle as a poor substitute for the tangible paint of an original picture. This criticism misses the point, I think. Brought together in one volume, showing so many excellent and great works which we could hardly hope to see together in the original, these color reproductions are an exciting display. Here twentieth-century art appears more live, inventive, gay and personal than the solemn expositions by its academic and philosophical friends or the pained reactions of alarmed traditionists would lead us to expect.

MEYER SCHAPIRO  
Columbia University

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Jean Lipman and Alice Winchester, *Primitive Painters in America: 1750-1950*, New York, Dodd, Mead, 1950. 182 pp., 69 illus., 4 color plates. \$6.

Alice Winchester and Jean Lipman have produced a delightful and instructive book of profiles of the charmingly naive nineteenth-century painters which they and a score of other authors have published in recent years. In addition there are two essays by Nina Fletcher Little and Sidney Janis characterizing the general trends in the field of the primarily self-taught, imaginative art of the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Jean Lipman has contributed a chart with data on six hundred artists, which provides an astounding quantity of much unpublished material that will prove useful to collectors in unearthing hitherto unnoticed work by primitive artists.

In her introduction, Alice Winchester points out very appropriately how difficult it is to agree on one term to define a type of art which has been produced through two centuries under any variety of circumstances by individuals differing widely in the amount and quality of their training. Since none of the terms suggested—such as folk, popular, pioneer, artisan or amateur art—are precise enough to determine all those diverse works now in existence, one might as well accept for convenience the term primitive as the common denominator for pictorial work created outside of, or at least on the fringe of, the realm of the formally trained painter.

More important than dealing with definitions is the decision which must be made in each case to accept or reject an artist from the ranks of the primitive painters. The choice the editors have made is adequate and revealing. Among the twenty-seven painters treated are Edward Hicks (A. E. Bye), Joseph Whitting Stock (John Lee Clarke, Jr.), Eunice Pinney, Rufus Porter, Deborah Goldsmith (Jean Lipman), Thomas Chambers, William Mathew Prior (Nina Fletcher Little), Erastus Salisbury Field (F. B. Robinson). The last color plate in the book is very fittingly a painting by Grandma Moses. Amusing and rather significant of the attitude of the present-day primitive painter is the legally required line "Copyright, Grandma Moses Property, Inc."

The quality of the large-sized illustrations, many published for the first time, and of the color plates is unusual. If and when a new edition is needed it might be well to consider the inclusion of more exhaustive sketches of primitive eighteenth-century painters of whom there were so many in colonial days. This would place these painters in their proper environment, round out the book, and relieve those dealing with the academic painters from having to treat the primitives in the thorough-going way this has previously been done. In any case the reader would welcome the addition of a bibliography.

HANS HUTH  
Art Institute of Chicago



Winslow Homer, *The Country School*,  
from Marshall B. Davidson, *Life in America*

## Latest Books Received

- Agard, Walter Raymond, *CLASSICAL MYTHS IN SCULPTURE*, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 1951. x + 203 pp., 97 figs. \$5.
- ALVA: RECENT PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS, foreword by Herbert Read, London, Bodley Head, 1951. Unpaged, 20 plates, 10 in color. 21 s.
- Beer, Lisl, *STONES FOR BREAD*, Boston, Humphries, 1950. 79 pp., illus. \$2.75.
- Cox, Doris, and Barbara Watten, *CREATIVE HANDS* (2nd edition), New York, Wiley, 1951. xiii + 381 pp., illus. \$6.50.
- Davidson, Marshall B., *LIFE IN AMERICA*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin in association with Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1951. 2 vols., 1076 pp., 1200 illus. \$20.
- Doré, Paul Gustave, *THE BIBLE ILLUSTRATED*, New York, Pillsbury, 1951. 116 plates. \$2.25.
- Groenewegen-Frankfort, H. A., *ARREST AND MOVEMENT*, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1951. xxiv + 222 pp., 47 figs. + 94 plates. \$7.50.
- HISTORY OF CLASSIC PAINTING, edited by Germain Bazin, translated by Rosamund Frost, Paris, Hyperion (distributed by Macmillan), 1951. 356 pp., 240 black-and-white + 63 color plates.
- HISTORY OF MODERN PAINTING, edited by Germain Bazin, translated by Rosamund Frost, Paris, Hyperion (distributed by Macmillan), 1951. 356 pp., 240 black-and-white + 63 color plates.
- Morgan, Barbara, *SUMMER'S CHILDREN*, Scarsdale, Morgan, 1951. 159 pp., illus. \$5.
- Munkacsi, Martin, *NUDES*, New York, Greenberg, 1951. 75 illus. \$3.95.
- Piggott, Stuart and G. E. Daniel, *A PICTURE BOOK OF ANCIENT BRITISH ART*, New York, Cambridge University, 1951. ix + 27 pp., 73 plates. \$2.75.
- PORTRAIT MINIATURES: THE EDWARD B. GREENE COLLECTION, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1951. 38 pp., 44 plates, 2 in color.
- Russell, Martin, *GEORGE KEYT*, Bombay, Marg, 1950. 55 pp., 8 illus., 102 black-and-white + 25 color plates. \$8.50.
- Udipke, Daniel Berkeley, *PRINTING TYPES: THEIR HISTORY, FORMS AND USE* (2nd edition), Cambridge, Harvard University, 1951. 2 vols., 618 pp., 367 illus. \$12.50.
- THE WEST OF ALFRED JACOB MILLER, from the Notes and Watercolors in the Walters Art Gallery, edited by Marvin C. Ross, Norman, University of Oklahoma, 1951. xxviii + 200 pp. of plates. \$10.
- YALE UNIVERSITY PORTRAIT INDEX: 1701-1951, New Haven, Yale University, 1951. 185 pp., illus., frontispiece in color. \$5.

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